

## Notes of travel and life. By two young ladies—Misses Mendell and Hosmer ...

NOTES OF TRAVEL AND LIFE.

BY TWO YOUNG LADIES— MISSES MENDELL AND HOSMER.

“A chief's amang ye takin' notes, And faith he'll prent it.”

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TO J. M. TROWBRIDGE, AS A TOKEN OF HIGH ESTEEM AND RESPECT, These Notes ARE DEDICATED BY THE AUTHORS.

### **PREFACE.**

What! we book pedlers write a book? Who ever heard the like! We, writers? Ah! we fear our friends, in their fondness, are too hopeful when they urge us to publish a book. And such a book! The world pictured just as we saw it—good and bad! Bad people will call it downright impudence, to take their likeness, and then carry it to them to buy. They'll

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make up wry faces, and say it's a caricature. Yes, yes, we did say we were frank and independent; thought it a right and duty to tell people of their faults; but that was in our happy moods, when we couldn't see any. But to be actually telling them! We tremble when we think of it. What shall we do? Let us remember the good people we met. They'll smile at their picture—turn to the world, and pronounce us charming!

Reasons? Reasons, do you ask, why we have written a book? For one: as pioneers in a new sphere of labor for our sex, we would make known to them our success, and open to them the new avenue to Industry and Independence. Again: we saw people in their every-day clothes, and from our unpretending position, they showed themselves as they were. Thus we present a series of pictures from the great and of-never-failing-interest Book of Life. And third—and are not three reasons enough, for women, at least, who are not supposed to have any reasons?—we would replenish our purse, and turn our labor and thought into profit.

Here are the letters of both, each responsible for her own; though in joy or sorrow, loss or gain, we are one. If there is aught in this little book that shall tend to elevate mankind, release the oppressed, and strengthen the wavering, it has met our highest expectations, and with these hopes we carry it forth.

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### LETTER I.

Ellisburgh, N. Y

Heigh-ho! for an expedition! a flight—a new page in the life of your humble friend. But, dear Jane, don't start with fear that I am going to attempt an aerial flight, or that I utter this from a deep faith that the millennium is nigh at hand when the spirit shall take its transit from mortality in triumph; or that the new page in my hitherto peaceful life is that most important one in woman's existence—the one which embraces so large a portion of her heart's history; or that I have conceived any heroic scheme to make myself a

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martyr to some dreamed-of good, of which the future will tell its blessedness, and coming generations give glory to the author as their benefactor; or that I am dressed in that unique style so essential to a fashionable travelling equipage, and which is studied with so much care to give one its mark.

Ah! no, the picture is simple—the expedition has but two points which are noteworthy. It is against the taste, and against the custom of society—those insidious tyrants that rule the world, and woo their subjects most coaxingly with their witchery and lead them on by rewards; but if one dare rebel against the law, their wand turns to lead, and the culprit cowers as if guilty of some higher offence—condemned by a worthier mandate.

I am dressed with the simplicity, I'm sure St. Paul himself would have pronounced “becoming a woman;” with a countenance expressive of doubt and will combined, relative to my success; with an eye a little restless but full of thought, and movements quick, like one just going to make a desperate plunge with the hope that it would tell on the future. But, dear Jane, the pith of the whole affair—of so much importance—which causes my present movement—on which depends expected knowledge—aye more, a fortune perchance I've dreamed, lies quietly in a box, once used as a shoe box, now strapped and carried in my hand. This I shall open, and present to the wondering people, books of various sizes and titles, of tastefully colored covers, for the sale of which I shall announce myself as agent.

I wonder if warriors ever tremble just before battle, and desire, and almost will, to throw down their banner and—run; for what else could they do? How I wish some of the great ones had left their fears and weak points on record—a richer legacy to the world than all their bravery and triumphs! We see the victory, but we want to know how far we are from it. We easily assume strength in anticipation of any coming event, and the heart desires its approach to test this strength. But when the crisis arrives to prove ourselves victorious, or feel the ignobleness of being a coward, we halt, turn, and wish that a retreat could be equally successful, equally glorious.

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Already I anticipate your anxious inquiries and expressions of wonder. Why this expedition—why this battle against conservatism, which has kept us so long and so well? What new era has dawned upon woman, that she need go forth into the broad world for knowledge more than her 9 pleasure demands, or a fortune, save by a husband? Terrible perversion, I know! And, most of all, why I have left the honorable chair of the school-ma'am, to fill which my childhood dreamed the quintessence of all human perfectness, the crowning glory of mortals? In maturer years, when I was actually laboring to obtain the post of honor, I was initiated into a deeper earnestness of the great responsibility about to devolve upon me; yet none the less desirable, though the gilding looked less dazzling to older eyes. Oh! how thrilling were the emotions I felt at the thought that I could develop the pure unsophisticated mind in living principles; how I would develop all the good and strong that makes human nature glorious! But I will leave the charms of school-teaching to the dreams of childhood, and for a class of theorists to harp upon as the root of reform; and the practice of it to those who are born for it, whose natures, I must believe, are created of the rarest materials of humanity.

With a pardon for this digression, I would ask from the depth of my heart the blessings of all that is best and highest on the noble fraternity, as I most heartily bid it adieu. I enter my new field of labor to-day, although it is Friday, a day that the fates have frowned on, as fraught with disaster to the commencement of any new work. Wiser heads than mine have heeded the superstition with fear and reverence.

The childish goddess of April is here with her freaks and pranks—of storms, smiles, and tears. She wept all day yesterday as if she would never smile again; and I should have doubted that she ever could, had I not witnessed the same in her of old. But oh! this morning she laughs outright—so bright—too bright for mortals! All the nymphs in glee, are in her train, she the brightest. Her tears are turned to gems; only two hang in her clear blue eye, that tell she'll weep again—pleasing mark of her mortality! Such a morning 1\* 10 is always associated in my mind with the inimitable Rebecca at the well with her pitcher,

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giving water to the servant and camels of Isaac. I should think she would have greatly preferred meeting Isaac himself. But she modestly did not express the wish, and why should I?

I feel that there is danger lest this beautiful morning may divert my mind from its purpose, and of my losing the gathered dignity for the coming ordeal. I almost wish to be an April nymph, to laugh and dance in glee, even if I must weep to-morrow—I can do nothing less now. But who cares or believes in sorrow when the heart is glad?—Stupid must be the face, palsied the springs of life, of one who always keeps a remembrance of trouble to check merriment and the happy gushings of the heart. Oh! they tell some good thought, or some accomplished good. Ministering angels are born in the sunshine of gladness, even if they are christened in sorrow. Joyous moments in our existence are God-sends, as well as the hues of sorrow that stain them.

But I will hie me off in this gladsome mood, and pray that its darker sister come not near me again until I have done the first work; for a sunny face and a glad heart leaves its impression; and who would not care to do so small a good, if nothing more? I'm playing the theft on all my friends; they are ignorant of my errand. I excuse my disrespect to filial right in keeping my mission, that I may avoid the preliminary part of a long dissertation on propriety, and what woman should do, or may do, because she has done: the utter failure of the project, and such a useless exposure to censure and ridicule—last of all, and most to be considered, such imprudence for one of Eve's daughters to travel unprotected and alone, as if all the world were wolves to catch and devour Little Miss Red Riding Hoods. I'll remember her fate!

I must make my *debut* as a pedestrian Book Pedler, and 11 among my own townspeople, as my penniless purse forbids any escape to new faces; and I may experience the truth of the scriptural declaration: "That a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country."

But adieu, dear Jane, and stoically prepare yourself for a heavy bombardment on your generous nature by medley missives, From your devoted friend.

## LETTER II.

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

Bidding good-bye to my friends, and with as simple a reserve as I could command, yet seeming to look a little wise, I told them I was going to a small village about five miles distant, to visit a friend, truly a friend—one who has lent me eight dollars to aid in the commencement of my enterprise, for which I am really grateful. If I succeed, I will call him one of my benefactors, as well as the noble publishers who also gave me credit for books without security. How such confidence warms my heart! How carefully will I prove myself worthy of the trust, and strengthen, or at least not help to lessen, their confidence in mankind. Kissing the three little cherubs as usual at my departure, almost with a bound I passed the gate, as each were wondering and asking what aunt Sarah had in that box.

My walk was pleasant, without any marked interruption. Occasionally some lean gossip of the neighborhood peered with a quizzing glance at my box, which seemed to hang so conspicuously at my side, as if some unusual importance was attached to the contents. Little did they think it contained such rich food for their souls to feast upon, and I an embryo Book Pedler.

On my way I saw small boys, earnest as larger ones, 12 building mimic saw-mills, premature bridges, and sailing miniature boats on leaping, bounding brooks, that just had birth from the heavy shower, and would be gone almost as soon. How such “make believe” fosters the earnest—inlays the poetry and soul of future life. How it developes truly children, for what men call the real and useful things of life. It educates more than school-ma'ams do in months or ever, unless they take them into the practical school of nature. I wish mothers would restrain their children less, from the fear of a little exposure,

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or a dirty dress. More daring acts in boys would make greater men; and to-day, in my heroism, I think the same true of woman. We are all too much like the old lady, who forbade her dear Willie to go into the water until he had learned to swim.

I greatly enjoy the beauties of spring—my favorite season. The vegetable world is fast unfolding all its glories. The grass has velveted the fields, which in weeks will wave as plumes. The daffodil and violet blossom in the cottager's garden, and the delicate wild flower in its woody bed looks up and smiles; they teach us restless mortals a lesson. The pe-wee sings out its silvery name; the croaking crow seldom comes, since his mission to announce the approaching spring is fulfilled. The frogs have been heard the third time, and nature, ever true to her word, never plays the rogue and binds them again in their wintry ice-home. A few robins have come with motherly care to see if it is a fitting time for the emigration of their kind, and their clear notes make the fair boy clap his hands with delight, and almost breathless, run to tell, with larger eyes, in half-articulated words, “a robin has come!”

The husbandman whistles his tune, if he has not since the last spring, as his bright new share turns the furrow, worked by a stalwart pair of oxen, that do well their master's bidding. How the farmer's heart must thank God for 13 seed-time, and pray with trust for the harvest! Who can be good if not the husbandman? The proud strutting cock comes forth with his more quiet companion, crowing as long and as loud as if it were the next day after the creation of Adam. The lowing of cows is heard from the neighboring farms; the bright shining milk-pans stand aslant against the shed walls to be sunned. The cheese-vat has its appointed place, ready for use, and bright anatto-colored cloth is spread on the bushes to dry, preparatory for the bindery of huge cheese. All tell of the thrift and patient industry of the housewife. Sheep were feeding on the hill-side, with their precious little lambs, that gambol and leap like sprites, in sudden graceful curves; their woolly selves are nature's tufted work. The harmless tender things!

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In my walk to the destined place, I thought how I should best introduce myself and business, and framed a speech, but would forget it at a second rehearsal, and again reframed it, till I had one which took in my business with proper dispatch and sufficient deference to my hearers. I studied an appearance by which I should sustain all my independence, and yet pleasingly solicit subscriptions for my books. Dear Jane, I thought so much about myself. What a prominent person self is! I wish I could for a while forget my own identity! I would like an honest confession from a few persons, telling how much they are occupied in thoughts of themselves. I rarely find those who will confess that the important personage I makes a large speck in their thoughts; at least I think it is a prominence of unnatural growth. I wonder some famishing reformer has not seized on it as a means of rendering himself notorious. I remember once introducing the subject to a lady who was always talking of herself, but she was "never troubled thus," and with much advice told me that it proceeded from the very essence of selfishness. I do not know as this is true, but if the enigma 14 is solved in my day, I'll mark well the nature of the solution, and publish it for the benefit of those who are thus afflicted. But pardon this digression, and give me your opinion.

When I reached the village I closely viewed each dwelling, that I might enter where I was quite sure the inmates would take books; but all looked forbidding; and passing on, I hoped that the next would promise more success, until I found 'twas the play of the coward, and rushed into the shoe-shop of a man that I knew, who was more marked for his Yankee cleverness than any other characteristic. I commenced telling my errand, and though not remembering what I said, I judge it was far from the studied speech I had framed for the occasion. I not only forgot to open my box in time to give the best effect, but forgot to open it at all. I conclude from the expression of the good man, that seeing the picture of the shoe on my box, he thought I had shoes to sell, and quickly replied that he did not need any. I left the shop with crimson cheeks, and after collecting my senses a little, called on a lady, only giving the dear creature an affection like my own, of not knowing what she was about. As I entered, a large dog started up, and came growling and



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driving most furiously toward the young Book Pedler; but the mistress called off Pontiff, and thus saved a queen, though incognito—the audacity of the creature! Getting into the open air and alone, I arraigned myself before that impartial judge, common sense, that was to have been the marshal of the day, to find the cause of such a failure. Was I doing what was against my idea of right, of honor—doing what I would not defend before all the world? Ah! no: after a full investigation of the whole matter, I found it proceeded from an over sensitive regard for success. I reasoned, and wrought myself up to the highest state of will, and grew so strong, and was so fully satisfied as to the reform, 15 that I felt no fear of a like failure. But I was inclined to retire from the field until morning; and needing no reason to second the retreat, I collected my scattered forces and turned to the house of my friend, where, feeling no restraint, I went off into a Petrea fit of over-acting in all I did and said. I talked unceasingly. The gas of feeling flew off as fire-balls, and the whole house would have been on fire had it contained combustible bodies. Some of the household seemed to doubt my sanity. The morning found me true to my resolution. After the preliminary customs were passed, and the good-bye and kind desires expressed by friends for my success, I went forth to conquer. I called first on a kindly gentleman of previous acquaintance, who looked over my books, and found one he very much desired. Feelings of accommodation took possession of me, I was so happy to furnish him with one. How good we can feel toward our neighbor when our interest prompts it! I called on many other gentlemen with equal success. Several ladies took books of me, and some sent me to their husbands to see if they could subscribe, for they had thought of getting some nice gilt ones for their parlor table. When I found the husbands, they must see their dear wives, to know what was wanted; for how could they see the need of books to decorate their parlor table? Dull, tasteless beings! I pray the dear wives will not have to abide by their want of taste, and I lose the sale of books from their stupidity.

I was directed to a very wealthy lady, “who always patronized the fine arts, was a great reader, and withal a strong ‘Woman's Rights woman.’” The last was thrown into a parenthesis by the relator of the lady's qualities, with a peculiar quirk of the eye, as if I was

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to meet my kind. Not knowing what grade of woman's rights the lady belonged to, I made no dissenting remarks to the narrator's surmise; but went as directed, and found the lady, whose 16 Amazonian form seemed to call for no physical rights, even if invoked to the battle-field. I found her one of those volcanic fires that had burst forth, and was pouring hot lava on the heads of our devoted men, with all her fury. Poor things, I tremble for them!

From the picture drawn of the wrongs and outrages done by them to our defenceless sex, I was painfully reminded of the buck's hunting and tearing the roe with the horns given him to protect the defenceless, hornless creature. What perversion of nature! How did things come to such a pass! The lady did not take the same view of woman's rights as I do, or she would have subscribed for some of my books, to have aided one at least to keep out of the jaws of such ravenous wolves.

But animated with my good luck—for I did not know that it depended on any greater power than luck—I wound my way home, dreaming of pleasant things to come, called occasionally at the country homes, and took subscriptions for several copies of "The American Ladies' Cook-Book." The good housewives intuitively or thoughtfully knew the power of good living—one of the main-springs of domestic harmony—a palm of peace. Put the world on a low diet, no matter how much the reason approves of it, and you will have the people all by the ears. It is second to only one feature that greatly affects the happiness and good temper of mortal kind.

I called on a wealthy young bride, with much comfort and beauty around her, and, as she selected a richly-bound and high-priced book, my grateful heart went forth as an appropriate compliment to her charms, in this little stanza:

"See here the bride—how sweet, how prim— The loving bridegroom—look at him?"

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But I will not give a eulogy on brides now, however important <sup>17</sup> it might be to you; I will merely assert for your ear, that they are young creatures essential to the happiness of all on this earthly sphere.

As I reached the environs of our settlement and passed the homes of my neighbors, unconscious that the secret of what my box contained had arrived before me, a leer, lank damsel, one of that class which is always marked for having a knowledge of others' affairs, opened the door of an humble abode, and gave me a most searching look of curiosity. Three little chubby boys, dirty and ragged, with black, funny, round eyes, and auburn hair, half-bleached to yellow, that hung straight from the crown of the head, so wilful that it could not be parted, sprang past the dame, and bounded to the road in spite of her resistance "to make them behave." With eyes growing wider at each look, one screamed at the top of his voice, "Marm, she aint a pedler; she don't look like one." Another of keener perception of behavior, hunched the first spokesman with his elbow, and in a lower tone said, "Be still; don't you see her box?" I enjoyed the fun equally as much as the woman did her chagrin at such an exposure, only hoping that the innocent boys did not get whipped for the practical use of their education.

On arriving at home, I found the knowledge of my pedlery had not reached the inmates. Without any prepared speech, I made known the whole secret, causing, I presume, a similar disturbance in the family to that created by the tyro-philosopher Franklin, with his whistle. Some of the members laughed heartily at the farce, as they pleased to term it; and others, looking gravely, with utmost severity, exclaimed, "What a figure for the world to laugh at!" Then came the satire of the younger portion, that always show their power thus: "Why, you really must have looked like a sage—a pilgrim, with parchments of importance to the 18 people." But I am impregnable, and have grown in my self-possession, on the anticipation of the money that is to be mine.

### LETTER III.

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

At the reception of these missives I send you, I see your form half-couching, sensitively shrink, and with both hands before your face, the palms turned outwardly, as we used to do so cowardly when we school-girls played *snow-ball*, and knew that the well-made ball was on its way. And, dear Jane, I could hope these scribblings will produce equally as happy an effect as when the white messenger came, and we laughing with such full heartiness if happening to catch it, sent forth exclamations of “bravo” in joyous screams from both parties. But don't raise too heavy a battery of defence; it would be a loss of your strength, and a waste of my small cannonading. The balls sent will have little of the iron in them; they will be the creation of substances gathered, like growing moss, from living bodies in its neighborhood. I shall, at least in our peaceful country towns, meet none of the “seven wonders under the sun,” and which one sees, too, through a telescope formed purposely for their eyes. The glasses to mine limit my vision in seeing the wonderful. But if, through my artificial microscope which I intuitively use to view the elevations and depressions of the human character, I find phases of importance—which may be found here as elsewhere, as no bounds are prescribed, but where the human race is found, spring up indigenously—I may hope to interest you in these at least, as all are selfishly sympathetic in those of their kind.

But I am to travel on this *terra firma* —in this real land 19 as a book pedler—if from no other cause than from want of magic—and especially the magic of money. I will tell you of nice earthly fairies that always wear good leather slippers, and never think of such a silly thing as losing one, to be found by some country swain, who would prove himself a frantic lover, because the wearer had a pretty little foot—of true honest-hearted girls, with full blooming cheeks, that take love into a proper consideration as a real earnest affair, and lovers as a part of the domestic compact, filling the substantial relation of husband. These, with hopeful hearts, ply with untiring industry, the little spinning-wheel, and the yarn comes out in shreds, and is mended at each break by a fair plump finger, dipped in a gourd shell

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filled with water, that hangs on the standard, and carried and reattached to the flax head that hangs on the distaff. This slow progress of spinning a web for “a long piece,” would utterly discourage less patient and hopeful hearts.

At the coming of summer, as one approaches the dwellings, brown linen cloth may be seen on the grass to bleach, and there is heard within a heavier buzzing noise—a wheel of larger circumference, attached to a head and spindle, moves, and, as one enters, a maiden is observed turning it;—she is passing to and fro, and drawing fine yarn from a roll of white wool—a mystery in itself to the unpractised eye. A large “bunch” of the same kind is lying near by, to be converted into yarn. Slowly the wheel is turned as the thread is drawn out, and then quick buzz, buzz, and the yarn is wound up as if the spinner were blown by a gust of wind—the whole art of getting one's day's work done early. Charming practical beings, every sane mind admires you!

Observe their demure and quiet countenances, as they assiduously cut and sew together bright-colored calicoes, intermingled with white cloth of a variety of forms and size, to make bed-quilts. Very often these darling girls will place 20 all they have finished out on a line “to air;” but I could never see the use of airing them so often, though I have been told that they are exhibited as “baits for beaux.” Many of them have twenty-five or thirty in number, and are still making more. The dear creatures! I should think they lived in the frigid zone. If you could see the stars, stripes, and zig-zag forms that compose the right side of the quilt, you would think they were to represent the “Thirteen States,” if no more. Besides, they have calico roses, and leaves of a great variety, the half moon, the rising sun, and the setting of the same, and even men and women. I once saw Adam and Eve pictured on a quilt, before and after the fall—poor things!—and Noah's ark, with his zoological multitude. I may have drawn too primitive a view of our leading young ladies in the country at the present time, in placing them at the wheel and loom—a part of the household labors, that are of late superseded by the application of steam and water power, which greatly expedites and lessens domestic labor, although many of our matrons

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declare the cloth does not wear half so long as “home-made,” and one piece for the boys' trousers, therefore, must be made at home, and the stocking yarn spun.

In my journeyings through the country, I may hope to know how so large a space of time as was devoted to cloth-making is spent; for I take a great interest in my countrywomen—don't you?—and our men too.

I may find in my travels an Adonis. If I do—why—I will keep it to myself, as all sensible girls do—something that is never told to any one by judicious young ladies. I have a quiet hope of finding my better half; although a good old German woman, of whom I am a special favorite, declares, in tones like a prophetess—which quite makes me tremble—that I will never get married. The reason she gives is, that I have made no household preparations—no 21 bed-quilts and table-linen, and now, with a woful shake of the head, that no nice young man will have a pedler—and a roguish-looking one too. But, dear Jane, when I get away from home, I'm sure I'll not tell that I haven't any bed-quilts, and they will surmise that I am an heiress travelling in disguise, to find a true lover. I heartily wish woman's rights were here plenipotentiary, and then we would not have to stand back so coyly, blushing ourselves crimson, to be sought for, but we would declare our love; and if we should get refused, it would be far better than suspense—horrid suspense! Trembling tearful ones! As it is, with the old lady's prophecy ringing in my ears, I feel some misgivings, although I have tried several times to induce her to change the cruel verdict, by telling her how early I was impressed and took at heart the duties of the wife and mother—how I read with such eagerness every volume and essay on the subject, fully believing all—how I devoured, with intense avidity, all of Dr. Alcott's works to the Young Wife and Mother, and his invaluable work—“The Mother at Home;” and I became a very capable adviser to those who had restive children. I read the writings of an author whose name has a place in the literary world. I took with mingled fear and reverence her views of the purpose, end, and aim of woman's existence—that she was not created for herself—that her wants and happiness were subordinate to another—that she should consider man's happiness prior to hers in all things. So deeply impressed was my young mind with her

attractive style, that I took the matter into solemn consideration, and resolved henceforth to live to my purpose. I became so yielding and amiable for one day, that it called forth remarks of surprise from my brothers. They could not divine the cause, or what magic power had wrought the change; but they were never afterwards surprised by my yielding to them because of their manhood, however much their supposed rights or the superiority of their nature demanded it. I found all my convictions involving too great a sacrifice to believe the author's assertion a truth. Who ever heard of one having faith when one did not want to believe? A paradox, in nature!

But however much I tell the old lady of my capability, intellectually to fill the position—of my nice and well-built theory—my convictions of the influence of the wife as the builder of the husband's happiness and success in life—and of my whole heart with such fine susceptibilities to love, and how I would dedicate my household to wisdom and virtue, she wilfully persists and pronounces that fearful sentence which fixes my doom with the unmarried! She declares that “the surest way to domestic happiness is, in having enough to eat and wear, and a wife to give herself up to the superintendence of them.” Ah! a little happier decree than that of the sensible authoress! One submits with a better grace to the will of circumstances than to the will of mortals, particularly of mortal men.

But, dear Jane, don't quarrel with your husband on the reception of this from the force of the future example of your humble friend, but receive this budget of nothing, when I was to have written something! The flashy thing! Call it the tail of a comet, and I will send the comet next week. Remember, however, comets are supposed to be fragmentary parts of ruined bodies.

With a pardon and a short adieu, Yours, &c.,

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**LETTER IV.**

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Ellisburgh, N. Y.

I rested on the first day of the week, as the Sabbath of the soul and body. Most blessed and welcome day to the laborer! On the second I rested also, as a security to myself from stiff bows, unaccompanied with a smile, unwelcome from one's friends, and sharp, quick tones and scowls from strangers, for the intrusion on that all important day to the housekeeper; although it has long worn, with much consistency, the name of "blue Monday." But on Tuesday I took my box, and journeyed towards the west, into a goodly land that was spotted, here and there, with growing little villages, to which I directed my course; and, on my way thither, called at the stately farm-houses.

The first lady to whom I announced my business, replied, that she had so much work to do she did not get time to read books, and did not read the Bible half as much, she supposed, as she ought. When I viewed the finely-furnished apartment, I suggested the idea of getting some books to decorate the table, as I find they are often bought for that purpose; but she left that all to her daughters, who were then absent. At the next place where I called, the whole household seemed to view me in my vocation as an inhabitant from some other sphere. In explaining the nature of my errand, all comprehended it sooner than the old lady; and one after another glided out of the room, well nigh bursting with laughter, suppressing it in chuckle-like giggles. Their exceeding mirth endangered the gravity of the book-pedler. The old lady remained, and looking perfectly mystified, asked many questions respecting my business, and "if they could not get the same books at the store." I was obliged to leave without clearing up her vision on the 24 subject; for how could she see through such glaring inconsistency as a young lady going about selling books? Sensible woman!

I met two neighbors who were ardently engaged in conversation on the leading topics of the day: First, the vast benefit of railroads to a community as a means of wealth to the farmer, the pleasure and convenience of a ready market. They contrasted the farmer's position in society before, and since, the introduction of the railroad which has



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been in operation but a few months in our vicinity. Before its construction, the farmer sought the purchaser of his produce, with his hat in his hand, and a low bow, saying: "Sir, I have some grain I should be happy to sell; are you buying now?" The merchant replies, very complacently and indifferently, that he will take some at such a price—a price scarcely paying the actual cost of production. The seller leaves as one receiving an accommodation; and saying it shall be sent to him at his pleasure. The scene is changed now; the buyer seeks the farmer, who begins to think and act as if all the world depends on him. The merchant obsequiously inquires if he has any grain to sell. The reply is, that he has, stating his own price. The buyer bows gratefully, saying he will send for it.

Then followed the next exciting subject—the great crisis of the coming election—its vital importance to our country—the success of their party—as both gentlemen were of the same politics—and for Pierce. Here I chimed in most modestly, 'I am an agent for the 'Life of Franklin Pierce.'" This attracted their notice, and they looked up as if a woman had spoken of a subject out of her sphere, so akin to politics! But my demure behavior quieted their fears, and they both subscribed for the work; so I went on my way rejoicing that they were "Pierce men."

Passing on, rewarded with moderate success in my 25 labors—a necessary balance in business to keep one sane, and really the only assurance of steady happiness and healthy discipline of mind—I came in sight of the village spire, as a musical bell beneath it rang the hour of mid-day. Were you ever in the country at the ringing of a church-bell, as its tones vibrated through the clear air? The only sound that fills the broad immensity around you, echoes and reechoes, until as many bells are heard as there are seen shadows of the rainbow. On the Sabbath these solemn peals seem part of the worship in such deep stillness, and prepare the soul to enter the sanctuary of God. Its ring at noonday through the six days of the week tells in gladness to the laborer his hour of dinner; and you will see the farmer emerging from highland or partly furrowed river land, guiding his well-trained team on its way to rest and repast.

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If you possess the charm of a perfect self-reliance, with power and the position to develop it, then you know the independence of a farmer's life. How my soul praises God for such goodness and beauty in the manifestations spread around me! Such a day and such a world in all its parts! I have never felt so free to enjoy life untrammelled by care, unrestrained by the false conditions which in modern times restrain woman from sunshine, and make her a pale, trembling house-plant. These walks, even by one's self, strengthen the inner and outer man. How much larger the soul would grow to dwell more in God's house, and less in human habitations!

I called in the suburbs of the village where the household were about gathering for dinner; an invitation was extended to me with a hospitality that admitted of no doubt of its sincerity. During the meal, the conversation turned to my vocation, the position of woman, the few occupations allowed her by society, and the effects on her character. It was really understood for this first time—how I dared to come forth in this new labor for woman. I felt new life for my work diffused through me—a burst of joy almost to sadness—my heart grew too full, and gave utterance in tears.

The heart may be schooled to receive, untouched, scoff and opposition, to be the object of ridicule, to meet physical danger with daring courage; but who ever thought of wearing an armor to ward off love and sympathy, of shielding one's self from hearts that would come in and give strength to your own, even if it would keep one from crying where it was not a pretty place to cry! Who ever proved a brave soldier and could fight when baffled by unexpected war implements, or when the enemy brought and laid at your feet the spoils?

I hear you half asking what bearing my life has to soldiery and warfare. Dear Jane, did you ever know any one attempt any action out of the common course, who did not think whether they told it outright or not, that they were soldiers, aye, martyrs, persecuted martyrs, wronged of their rights? But don't look through your telescope at the wrong end, and see me a crippled, diminutive, worn-out soldier; but, if you please, a fresh little grenadier, just beating to the tread of "Hail Columbia," or any other national air I

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perchance might be humming, with now and then a slight skirmish for the honor of my post, I winning the laurels of course. What ever flourished long at a time without counter-acting influences? What may one expect in the broad arena opening to human freedom, but to get jostled and cuffed, as throngs are struggling and pressing to the fount, each with their goblet to drink at the stream, and, may be, some may blindly drink of the bitter waters, and madly push their companions off the right path? Pity restless ones! Patience, soul! In time all will find their places; and then how brightly will they see—through charity! All!

27

### LETTER V.

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

Dear Jane: Have you ever rode in a sleigh when the ground was covered partly with snow and ice, and the horses would get in full speed, and pass the naked places, seeming not to heed them? I left my good friends, like a well equipped winter conveyance, launched on plenty of snow, and glided over all the rough places in my day's journey. The speed given will not end in one day, or year, nay—never! Words fitly spoken from the heart are divine, are celestial! I wish we had more of them.

I canvassed the little village, often meeting persons who seemed dumb from amazement at such an anomaly in a civilized community. One motherly old lady, looking over her spectacles, viewed me as an object of charity. She was puzzled how to offer her condolence, but after a significant pause, with pitying air, she asked me if I could not get sewing. With deference to her age and ignorance, I gave as satisfactory an explanation as my ingenuity could devise; but I find it very hard to make people see through my telescope—the crazy thing!

In another lady, I met one of those bodies that fly off in one direction—no matter how much you aim to pull them back. You scarcely get hold of them, when they are off again.

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She was quiet while I announced my business. Seemingly she heard, but looking at me with half closed eyes, being so intent on her own business, she dashed off into a history of her domestic affairs, her housekeeping, her family—a remarkable family hers! There never existed such Johns and Williams—such hens and cows—and her husband—such a husband! My only amazement was that he 28 had not been elected president long ago! Her daughters were nearer the mortal. She talked of marriage, death, geese, turkeys, and her kitchen, all in one tone. At the kitchen—with a long breath, she whirled me through its mysteries, while I tightly held on my chair, and sympathetically entered into all I could best appreciate, thereby hoping to secure her subscription to a book. Selfish mortal! She described scenes at which a charmed listener would have wept and laughed in quick succession; of terrible danger in geese-picking times—of the amount of feathers plucked from the struggling animals—attempts at the first milking of young cows, when nobody could get near the creatures but her—and she with hair-breadth escapes. I became fearful I should never get away, as she approached the only subject I could think of, which she had not touched. She commenced: “When I was a girl”—here I rallied all my courage and interrupted her. I thought necessity might excuse, if politeness would not, and presented my cook book for her examination. She was so long deciding, which I saw was not to be in my favor, I took a happy leave before the fiat was fully pronounced. I saw men in groups standing by stores, and judged from their gestures, that the subject before them was of great moment; and as I passed, heard the words “foreign,” “railroads,” “exports,” “election,” “presidency,” and the names of Pierce and Scott, pronounced as if counterparts of each other. One gentleman seemed to be dilating eloquently to a quiet hearer, on the wonderful age we live in. What if women talked as much about the theory of housekeeping?—the art of making good bread, which every one knows is of the greatest importance to the existence of the human race? How the stronger sex would talk of woman's tongue—of its elasticity and endurance, and such nothings to talk about! Abused creatures!

I called on an old gentleman and his wife, seemingly well mated, who had reared a large family—amassed a fine fortune, and now had come to spend the remainder of their days in the village. I had the “Lives of the three Mrs. Judsons.” The old lady expressed much joy at meeting with the book, and desired that I should go to her husband, and see if she could take it. I went to him, and told the good lady’s wants. He took it, looked it over, and remarked that it was a book he should care nothing about, but would subscribe for the “Life of Wilbur Fisk,” if I could furnish it as cheap as it had been offered him—below its retail price. I told him his wife wanted the “Three Mrs. Judsons” for herself; he said she could read his books. Indulgent man! I prayed the wife might possess that most desirable of all human virtues—a perfect submission—seeing through her husband’s eyes, fully trusting that he knew best for her. If not, O Lord! be merciful and comfort her! If St. Paul is permitted to behold the scenes of this mortal sphere, and to see the result of his beautiful injunction, as it is carried out by thousands of the executives of his mandate—aye, I trust he groans, even in heaven!

I saw beautiful ladies in richly furnished parlors, reclining on soft sofas, imitating nature’s handiworks in worsted flowers wrought on canvas, who were as delicate as the white lily that bloomed beneath their artistic touch. O! the tender ones—how I would take them all in my arms, yes, and carry them out into the sunshine! Dear Jane, don’t you see how they would scramble back into the house again; with both hands to cover their faces, wishing for the first time in their lives that they had larger hands, and muttering, if ladies do mutter, of freckles, impudence, and getting tanned? I should feel a conscious pride in arousing their ire for once, even if I Was the culprit.

30

’Tis pleasing to be a martyr to one’s idea of right, to the accomplishment of a good. I fear some of the fair ones’ apparel was so Frenchified in its style, that St. Paul would hardly have deigned to give them advice as becoming to young women. How necessitated beings enjoy having some patron saint to back them up in their virtues, perchance for want of

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means to be otherwise than sensible. How true we are to act in wise things, when we can't do better. O! the virtue of a necessity! But I think it matters not what St. Paul said, (and conclude the dear ladies think the same, from practical manifestations,) if nature approves of the caprices that she is subjected to by dame Fashion.

I went to the home of a young lady who was once a schoolmate of mine, and was ushered into the parlor, where I found mother and daughter. The mother languidly requested me to be seated; the daughter raised her half-closed and dreamy eyes, and gave me a look of recognition without moving from the velvet sofa on which she was reclining. I addressed the mother, making known the object of my call. She weariedly turned over my books, and passed some of them to her daughter, saying: "Daughter, dear, would you like to subscribe for any?" The daughter, half-rising, and selecting a popular work, subscribed for it, ordering a copy richly gilt and bound, when the mother added: "Daughter, have you consulted your purse, with regard to your jewelry, and perhaps a party dress for the coming month?" Ah, me! Am I dreaming, or is this the mortal greatness that we are all striving for!

Shortly after, I heard well-expressed thoughts from an old gentleman on the degeneracy of the times. Every word seemed to me so full of truth, in the mood I found myself after the last interview. You know a truth does not always impress alike forcibly; but then I could have given the old man's hand a hearty shake for the congeniality of sentiment. 31 His dear partner sat silently and attentively listened to the remarks of her spouse, as if Moses was speaking unto the people. I tarried all night with the aged couple, who were so comfortably nestled on this earth; but the nestlings had all fled, chosen mates, and built nests of their own. How instructive and pleasing to meet with the aged, who are full of the experience of life, and have lived justly to themselves. Old age presents a mirror of the past life. How really agreeable the venerable lady! How placid and dignified her bearing! The vanity of early life all vanished, she talks of herself as she would of another, and seems a missionary in all that is good. The aged have nothing left them but God and Heaven. At the close of the social repast of the evening, the old man devoutly engaged in

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prayer. He asked for the wisdom and blessings of Heaven to rest upon the young friend tarrying with them through the night, to which my heart fervently responded, amen! It is well at times to be made to feel our dependence—to take all in at one thought, one feeling—to let the whole self be humbled—to know the limit of our strength, our knowledge—to see clearly the hand that giveth all.

In the morning I went forth, and on my way overtook a bright, happy school-girl—not at all like Shakspeare's schoolboy—who bounded along in tidy dress, with a little basket on her arm, that contained the good dinner. This little fairy skipped along so lightly, I felt she had a new joy in her heart—for one can't always bound gayly, if they are young. I accosted her with a “good morning,” to stop her speed; for I do love the presence of children, and wanted the charm, too, to make me feel light-hearted. Children always infuse their spirit into my susceptible nature. As she turned around—such a radiant face!—her eyes sparkled and danced like sunbeams. At a second look, she gave me her confidence, for she had not a full initiation into worldly discretion yet, in keeping back the first fresh thought. But, however well trained, the secret of so much delight must come out; and in sweet, artless tones, “Ma' went to the store yesterday, and bought me some new black shiny shoes to wear to meeting;” and she involuntarily looked at the tiny bare foot, seeing in thought how charmingly it was to be adorned. Ah! the little poet in embryo, may such sweet thoughts come to you from every thing! For, dear Jane, is not that the way poets are made? Does not the first impression—the first experience in things create poetry of heart and feeling? Then the picture glows and lives through the pen—warms, matures, and brings forth the half-conceived thought—half-finished picture in other hearts. I wish some one would give the process of making poets—perchance they can tell of their own birth. Mothers so often wish, as a matter of taste, that their children should know only abundance—and how unweariedly they labor for it—that a pair of new shoes should be as old ones to their children. Thus, half the charm of childhood would be lost; it might develop even characters, but not so great. I lived again in the darling girl's joy—for I remember well the first pair of “meeting” shoes I ever had, although I never wrote any

poetry. How I looked at them in early morning, at noon and evening, and I presume oftener. I did nothing but skip for a whole week, from the elasticity of my new shoes I was to wear. I saw myself in meeting, and even the minister looked at them. I kept them on the parlor table for the first week that they were occupants of the house; and for my adoration of them, my naughty, plaguing brother snatched and threw them on the floor. I caught them up, half blinded with tears, looking to see if they were soiled, as he most sarcastically asked, "If they were never to be worn where dirt grew?"—the first time I had thought they must wear out. Oh, mortality!

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But, dear Jane, I expect never to get another pair of shoes that will have such a charm, or give me poetry of thought, that will make me sing and dance, or dream of a sweet future, unless I find a pair that has the magic, and produces the same result as did Cinderella's glass slipper.

## LETTER VI.

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

Dear Jane: Don't you remember when we were little play girls, how we would build a board play-house, with the help of our brothers, who always drove the props in the earth and lifted the heavy boards, while we would get every thing ready to keep house with our broken furniture, and then take supper on something eatable, if we had it; if not, "make believe"—then leave our play-house for home, just time enough before dark, so the bears wouldn't catch us? O! the bears! How in the morning, at the break of day, we would run towards it, and begin to look where it stood, as soon as we started from the house; but as we could not see it from the spot we did last night, fearful apprehensions darted through the mind—then leap after leap to it. Oh dear! O me!—the winds had blown it all down, or some big ox had tried to get himself through the door for a bit of supper he smelt, that we happened to leave! How, with the whole face bathed in tears, half-blinded, and sobbing,



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as if the heart would break, we picked up the scattered fabric; and, as the tears ceased, we called the old beast bitter names, and wished hard things for him, as if he were more to blame than the wind, that had done the same thing often, and we didn't 2\* 34 scold a word! You may imagine me in a like sorrowful mood from your last letter. Oh! how could you—how could you dissect my letters thus, even if justice and I had granted it?

With the modesty of all writers, I acknowledged the demerits of my letters—that they were not worth your perusal, presuming that you could not endure to get through one; and imagining that you dreaded the reception of them as a cannon ball. But, dear Jane, where was your worldly discretion? I should think you had put on the plain garb, and when I see you again I shall expect to be greeted by a quiet shake of the hand, and the solemn *thou*. Such frankness is unbearable.

Do you suppose I would have written such long letters to you, if you did not read them? Did you not think that I really felt a complacent satisfaction as I sent each one—that it had an expected charm that was always realized—that your eye brightened when it came, and, in haste to read it, you wished the company gone—if perchance you had company, —and your absence of mind, if you were a maiden, would be attributed to a letter from a lover? But you have taken all these meritorious and modest apologies wrong, as if I were in earnest, and made a wreck of all my letters. Two you have burnt in effigy, of one you have severed the head from the body, and its lifeless limbs lay for me to weep over—another you have so shattered and gleaned (I suppose you think of its dregs and nothings) that the shadow left will only serve the purpose of making homœopathic soup, which, doubtless, you would like to order me to subsist on for a week, to quiet the fever you must have expected to cause. Cruel! And one of my letters you have used as wadding for your cannon to shoot the general and blow up the whole magazine. And then you inquire so coolly,—with pretended innocence—where the comet is, I promised to send? As if 35 you did not know when it came,—and you say too, that the light of the tail went out from the want of a replenishing body—that it burned out as a wick without oil!

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I am sure this terrible havoc of yours, this siege, will arouse every sentinel to his post in the field of my latent genius. Henceforth you may expect divers things sent upon you for all these transgressions. I would advise you to put on an armor of iron and a pair of leather goggles to protect your mortal sight from brilliant lights that will hereafter emanate from my pen. Like Delilah, you have shorn me of my present strength—but like her, I pray that you are penitent.

### LETTER VII.

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

The fabled frogs, that were pelted with stones by naughty boys, had the courage and chance to speak out: “Children, although this may be sport to you, it is death to us.” I suspect, at this, the boys all ran with fear at frog-speaking; and, when left alone, the frogs jumped up on a log, although lame and wearied, and contemplated the whole affair, wondering they did not show more resistance—indeed, did not give them battle; for what were they but boys? What knew or thought they of superiority and power? The one that had reproved them sat blushing with self-satisfaction and kindling indignation, stretched forth his brawny arm, the muscles swelling big, and exclaimed: “Let them dare to do it again.” On that, they went to sleep, for they needed repose. When they awoke, “Behold, there was a new heaven, and a new earth!” and they went on singing. Not unlike the rest of the world.

I will take my pen and write you again of my wanderings 36 into a land that bears another name, although no perceptible landmark divides the two towns. Its surface is level, of rich soil, presenting to the eye a high state of cultivation, and its borders are washed by the waters of Lake Ontario. The people viewed me in my business, as a Canaanite would a stray Israelite. They wore the expression, that whatever my design, they had nothing to fear from one so unpretending. Some looked a little curious at my telescope, as if I might be a spy, and they treated me with the utmost reserve. Most of the tender ladies pitied me

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exceedingly; and my cheerful manner they attributed to the happy effect of religion. This they thought enabled me to bear up under the severities of, my life, which, they fancied, were dreadful. When I told them that the pleasure was vastly greater than the pain, they gave me the additional merit of modesty, with my patient endurance. In spite of all I could say, they accorded to me a great virtue. They did not think, and much less desire, that many of the downtrodden sisterhood, from want of ways to earn a living, to gratify their taste and cultivate their minds, should assume a like position. I admired the practical part of pity which the good ladies bestowed on me, in subscribing for my books.

One lady viewed me with a sorrowful gaze, not taking her eyes from me, although I tried to interest her in my books. Suddenly rising, she left the room, and returned with a plate of cake, which she offered to me, remarking, "you must be hungry." Did I look so famished, or had she a desire to do a good act, or did she suppose I needed refreshment after the eloquent effort I made in enumerating and describing my books, with so much pedler enthusiasm? But I left the house with the hunger I entered—the want of another subscriber. I felt at least the comfort of a decision, which is always desirable to a pedler.

My success here was unequalled by any former efforts in 37 my labors. I found myself in that most happy mood of entire indifference to taking another subscription through the day. I grew so independent, I thought it would be a luxury to get refused. It is well such days don't always come to the book pedler, for an insane hospital would have to be erected for the crew.

At night, I found myself in a peaceful neighborhood, entering a large stone house, where all things had the appearance of giving a welcome hospitality to a traveller. I introduced my business; the lady looking over my books, desired some nice gilt ones for her parlor, and wished her husband would come, who was momentarily expected. The lady, with an inquisitive aspect, questioned me as if she were asking too much. "You don't live in these parts?" Next, how far I lived?—"You don't expect to return to-night?" And here the good woman had come to the point, either by the magnetism of my will, or the intuition of her

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own good heart, that prompted—"Won't you stay with us through the night?" Without an apology, I readily assented. The good man had returned; and, after an introduction, we were summoned to the table. I came near starting back with alarm, for my taste was shocked at the extravagant variety and quantity of food that was placed on a small-sized table. To give you any idea, you may imagine a large city restaurant turned in upon it. I sat down, and joined in the process of dispatching a portion of the food. I soon found that the husband was the head of the family. Should he not be? Yes, yes! Don't quarrel; hear me out. He was the head, body, and soul—not from any will of his own, but from the necessity of his superior capacity. How is it that so many apparently bright women we meet with, perform so small a part in the duties of the help-meet? Were they made only to perform the part of attending to the household—making cakes and sweetmeats, that give their families the dyspepsia? They 38 cannot utter a half-dozen sensible thoughts on any subject, and even in their household labors they seem to have no correct experience. They do their work from habit, their judgment yields to every paltry fashion, and the husband is obliged to make all the calculations that extend beyond the imitation of others. The woman's rights party charge all this to the men: no, no, they are not in the least to blame, but kindly, and with much patience, aid their blind mates. When woman becomes sickly sensitive respecting one thought or act, all the superior qualities are absorbed, and the whole strength is given to the one object.

The American women exhibit a morbid sensitiveness to the idea of beauty—a false standard of beauty, which, if examined in the light of reason, would be thrown away as dross. Think you there could be recorded as many martyrs to any one principle of right, or even to all put together, as at the altar of an acknowledged beauty! It matters not in what form it presents itself, or how; whether in the cruel piercing of the flesh, to be adorned with hanging jewelry, or to bear, uncomplainingly, day by day, a compression of their bodies, to please the eye with the supposed beauty of a slender waist. But I will pronounce amen to this subject, that I may finish my letter, and not call the wrath of woman down on my humble head. My lady hostess would have turned me out doors, if she had dreamed such

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a flash of preacher eloquence originated from the administration of her household, or perhaps from jealousy, if she had known how many times I wished her husband had a wife who could better appreciate him.

After the evening was spent in pleasant conversation, I was conducted to my chamber, and the good lady showed me the taste of her arrangements; asking repeatedly, "Is not that the fashion?" When left alone, I tried my downy bed, which needed a ladder to ascend to it. As I lay me 39 down to sleep, I was buried completely—a wave of feathers rolled over me, and I should have sunk, I fear, to rise no more; but my head lodged on something I suppose were pillows, but such dense bodies that they were illy suited to the purpose for which they were designed. The odor coming from the feathers being new, disturbed my rest, and I dreamed I saw myself carried home with a feather fever. I spent the wakeful part of the night in framing stormy speeches for the reform of my sex in housekeeping; but in the morning I decided it most expedient to remain in the book business—for who likes to pay for advice? I smilingly met my hostess, who inquired if I slept well? I did not tell her the whole truth, for that "is not the fashion," when not complimentary. I sought my home, and after six days' labor, rested on the Sabbath.

### LETTER VIII.

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

"One swallow makes no summer," and taking subscriptions for books, is not selling books. By subscription none get books, and the agent gets no money—the end is not yet. But a failure may come, and the inexperienced have fears. The weariness of life does not end it! When one awakes as from a dream, tired of over exertion, and asks: What is life—what is it to live?—and would seek some lone spot and forget oneself, and mankind—this looks no brighter! To stand still, one cannot—and to pass along as the waves of time please to carry one—in the common crowd, is unsatisfying—aye, sickening! What then? Labor—unceasing labor. Relight thy lamp, and on, on! Ask of thy Father strength for the combat. If

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thou dost not feel the joy now, 40 nor see the end thereof, those that wear the thorns, shall the crown. The martyr heeds not the pain he sees the victory—the light—the glory!

With these thoughts and feelings, I took my box, and reluctantly journeyed northward—to a land that abounded with milk and money. “Some fell in stony places;” this applies to the human race; for how else could a people be found on a land of stones and swamps. But people were here, and a land became like a garden from their nurture. Places once covered with sluggish waters, were now clothed with grass, and fed numerous herds, and the stones were used for fencing. The people waxed rich, and were self-satisfied in their abundance, feared not man—nor God, the Being afar off.

“Books! books—they would make their own, when any were wanted.” “What need had they of books? Behold our well-tilled land, our numerous kine—we supply the whole world with cheese and butter!” I was reminded that plenty of money did not create a taste for what was considered useless. A finished people, that lacked only one thing to complete their bliss—“a railroad.” Little did they think it would do more for them than to carry off their butter and cheese—that new wants would come with it—that inroads would be made upon them by emigration from other parts—or, how competition would spring up in every business,—that they would become a noble people—a finish built on that basis of character, formed from practical life—the key to real worth. I did not tell my predictions—it would have startled their fears, and I have been taken as a female juggler for such prescience.

In presenting one of my books to the mistress of a house for her examination, she took it as carefully as if it would bite, and held it up, looked at it, turned it over as if there was some catch, opened it bottom upwards, and with an intent gaze moved her lips for a long while; then I was satisfied 41 she had seen a book before and could read, although I doubted it at first. I called on another woman, telling her my business, when she exclaimed with an astonished satisfaction: “La me! I have a great many books, more than I know what to do with.” And she complacently viewed her library on the bureau—a shattered

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Bible, two Sunday-school books, a few tracts, a Cobb's Spelling Book and Baxter's Saints' Rest, with a hymn book, which, judging from its dilapidated looks, was published before the flood. Admitting there went into the Ark a pair of Books, they've multiplied greatly!

I found school-houses on my way that needed a thorough renovation by fire. I entered one, knowing that those interested in schools were welcome, and found a very young girl, whose chief object seemed to be to get the trifling salary of six dollars a month for the care of over fifty scholars, that probably were sent to her with no higher motive than to have them out of the way. You little immortals, how tenderly you are cared for by those with whom you are intrusted!

After much unprofitable labor, I bade adieu to a people who gave me hospitality, as if they were very sure they were not entertaining an angel unawares. I rode towards home in a public wagon, a capacious vehicle, covered with copper-colored cloth, the inside of which looked like the calash bonnets we used to wear. It reminded me of the wagon I used to see in my childhood's fancies that the women and children of the Israelites rode in when crossing the Red Sea, drawn by numerous mules and driven by Moses; for I suspect, —don't you?—that Moses did not deliver the precious ones into another's charge. Our wagon was drawn by two large steeds that had lost the spirit and frolic of their youth; and they looked resigned to what might come—to the lash, to labor or not, eat or drink, to wake or sleep: no sunshine, no apparent sorrow. Have you not met the like in the human race? Poor souls, whose lives grew darker and darker, hope springing 42 up less often, until it was only a spark, and that not to warm and cheer the present, but to brighten when the mortal shall put on immortality! How our hearts warm towards the comfortless ones! And we desire at times to retouch their souls with a new life, and cast the past with all its gloom into forgetfulness. But we grow weary in the work; the resurrection does not come from a few efforts, and we exclaim, "The heart need not break; it can build itself up on its own strength."

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Dear Jane, on my way home I had many reflections on people and life. Yes, yes; I see your eye glancing over the rest of this letter, to skip, as we used to when we read love stories, over all the reflections of the writer—the historical descriptions, and beautiful landscapes seen in glorious sunlight. But you are saved: I have kept all the sage reflections to myself; and do I not hear you say, “Thank you?” You wish I would get away from these rural scenes, and people that we know so well, to where they do things by magic, or it seems so, to the unsophisticated eye. Yes, I know, I am in haste to be gone. One don't see charmed things, and I don't believe there axe any where we have always lived. You remember how grand city people seemed to us, and the charm of their city airs has not vanished yet. The noise of their carriages had a gentility in their sound, and the horses—I used to wish father would get some like them—and the ladies—I wonder if it was envy we felt when their presence made us think we were nothing. How we would look at them—every move so graceful! Do you think they knew how attracted and delighted we were?—how easy in their silks! as if they never wore any thing else. And the way their frocks were made! no matter how much we tried to make one like them, ours would not possess the grace. Yes, I am in haste to realize the change of life. Although, dear Jane, one involuntarily shudders at the dreadful tales of bandits 43 and murderers we used to hear of when children, that were met with in travelling. How our eyes grew larger and larger as the narrator told that they looked like good people, and they could not tell them apart.

After much journeying one gets home. Oh! how welcome,—how wearied and sleepy! Sleep,—blessed sleep! I wonder all the world don't thank God more for sleep; and they never seem to think of doing right, so they can sleep; when they know the good only can sleep sweetly. Good little children often throw up their tiny arms, and thank God, and with a bound and a gushing laugh are fast asleep. I am glad some thank God for sleep. How one gapes!—

### LETTER IX.



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Ellisburgh, N. Y.

When I arrived at home last evening, the books were here for which I had first taken orders. I suppose you rationally conclude that I quietly said, "Have they?" as proper young ladies should have done. But, as usual, I did not think; I bounded into the house, threw down my box and bonnet—found the hammer and a wedge, and off flew the cover of the box that contained them, and each book was examined with exclamations of delight. I thought how satisfied my subscribers would be. 'Tis well one don't know all at first; if they did, little gladness would ever exist; for there is no gladness in expected things, but in spontaneous, sudden joy. Knowledge of thoughts and things gives calm, sober joy in the good we know may come.

The generous publishers! how I thank them, and wish all the blessings of this life on them and theirs, and heaven to come! What wondrous love fills one's soul at times! we would take the whole world in our arms, and bless them! 44 But I do admire those with a reverence who trust their fellow-men—and I feel no exception with regard to woman. I long for the power to aid and trust, rather than to always receive aid—a strange wish for a woman. This nineteenth century is producing queer things with us all; if they are the operations and revelations of Nature, all is well. Be it as it may, in our gathering strength, in our claims of equality, the opposite sex have nothing to fear—we will be very kind to 'em.

After much yawning, I went to bed—thanked God for rest, for labor—aye, for all. School teachers have dreams, yes, disturbed dreams of caring for bad scholars;—book agents dream of trying to take subscriptions, but never succeed. I'm glad they are dreams. "Rise with the lark, for it is wrong to lose your time in bed." I read this in "Cobb's Spelling Book" when a school girl, and have practised the advice this morning, and realized its truth. Early impressions affect the future character. My father was already up, true to his puritan education, a habit which descends and ends with the second generation; and all the living examples of early rising try to impress their children with the importance of saving their

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valuable time, and the health attending it. But our indulgent mothers do not practise the same method of impressing us with its invaluable benefits, as their ancestors did, whose command was their children's law; and the one command was the one to be obeyed. The true secret of many of the present mothers' troubles! What wisdom! I hear you say.

I wanted a favor of my father, but such a one as I feared he would laugh at if I asked in earnest. After several attempts to speak, he at last had my want of a horse and baggy, to distribute some of my books. He made some remarks about women managing the business, and the release of the stronger sex from care and labor, and their retiring 45 to the parlor—not a bad exchange, until woman gets a little rosier and stronger—is it? The horses were to be used, but I could have the carriage.

One of our neighbors had a horse past his prime, considered just the kind for the gentler sex to manage. The tender ones would not be endangered, unless the fair driver became engaged in conversation on love and marriage, and the blind creature ran off from some bridge with the precious load! The neighbor was happy to oblige. After many cautions how to care for the beast in regard to his infirmities, the sorrel was brought before the gate. Whatever might have been his dimensions once, he now presented but a shadow of a horse in his present diminutive figure. As he limped along he scarcely seemed able to support his own weight, from exceeding lameness. One could see at a glance that he had all his ribs. It was decided that he was both blind and deaf, and had apparently quite lost the sense of feeling. He was harnessed to the carriage—we were mounted and off. Can you imagine a rat attached to a large top calash, with harness to correspond? If so, you can see my younger sister and myself on our flight. I performed the part of driver, holding the reins with firm grasp, for I felt a little timid from inexperience, and neither did I know what a horse might do. I have found, in many cases, that it is not the fattest and fairest that proved the fleetest; and sure enough, our steed soon sped along briskly, forgetting his lameness. Nothing remarkable occurred on my way, except that the increasing speed of our beast led me to conclude that all his faculties had improved, which reminded me that people and horses are not entirely unlike; and the following reflections came to me as a

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truthful figure of mankind, though the picture may not altogether please your critical eye. But your kind nature will pardon all the imperfections.

Mankind often dread to take hold of the duties of life, 46 hang back; sigh for ease; to be released from labor, and for the god-power of wealth to exempt them from its struggles—even imagine that they are a little lame. See! they limp, but awkwardly—a bad imitation! but they do feel lame—yes, we know they do! They are confined to the house—doctored for their lameness, which seems sometimes in the foot or ankle, and then in the knee. At last a terrible attack in the arm and hand; the disease extends to the vitals,—the pain there is such a deadening sensation! they shut their eyes, and would turn away from the world. They begin to think they shall die, yet, no fears! no alarm comes over them, as the King of terrors approaches. No, they feel as if it were better they should be gone. Of what use were they in this dark and weary world? Just as they fancy they are passing away—yet with a good appetite—the Goddess Poverty enters with her mammoth whip—the stock is made of the very bone of severity—the lash is braided from the skin of the various animals—firmness, pride, perseverance and patience—and interwoven in the middle of these is a strip of economy, with a knot of starvation serving for the crack of the lash.

The sick one moans audibly—a stifled sound arising from his anguish—speaks sadly of his recovery to his friends—rubs his lame arm in their presence—and the weak foot is just being bathed in strengthening liniment, by sympathetic hands, as the Goddess approaches with a withering scowl. She raises her mighty arm, and in her huge hand is the ponderous whip. The innocent criminal leaps as if a miracle had been wrought, and bounds from beneath the lash just falling—hatless and shoeless. But he limps again a little, just as he is beyond its reach; for how could he help it? Nothing left him but work. He reluctantly enters the field of labor, and night brings the sweet reward.

The true laborer's reward, physically, is good digestion, refreshing sleep, and a happy flow of feelings; but a higher 47 and greater reward than all these is the knowledge—the

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discipline of mind and heart that may come from the using of each material formed by art, or unformed—and from the living hand of Nature.

Oh! most blessed Goddess, we kiss the rod that beat us, and do homage to thee who wielded it. Blindly we murmured against thy will when our visions were darkened, and we cried, “’tis grievous to be borne,” and entreated thy forbearance; but again we felt the lash of justice, and heard re-echoed the command, “Thou shalt earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow.” O! blessed Goddess Poverty! thy subjects but half acknowledge the glory of thy mission, and but feebly give thee thy due! They that wear the helmet of justice—the crown of power, are not found amid the sycophant's train. It is enough for thee to know that thy subjects are the creators of their own good, their happiness, and the great harmony and beauty of life.

Beneath thy lash spring up the gorgeous dome—the stately palace—the humble cot; the wilderness becomes a garden, the huge rock, the polished marble. The broad waters are made subservient, and countless millions glide over the surface safely, daring their boisterous play. Knowledge flies along its electrical path with the speed of lightning—the iron horse, with lofty mien, treads the earth with a mighty power, making pale and tremulous his maker. By human hands, Nature is converted into a thousand forms that move as if they had received the living breath. Blessed Goddess! from thy touch slumbering talent awakes—the poet sings a song of joy and hallelujah, and the multitude hear thereof, and weep. A kindred spirit of sympathetic soul, catches its strain, and paints it on canvas, and the eye beholds and the heart feels. Another spirit springing forth “sets perfect music unto noble words,” and the whole earth joins in the full chorus, and the heart warms with high thoughts. A tear glistens in the eye because of the painted loveliness, and the enraptured ear listens to the perfect harmony. Oh! blessed Goddess Poverty, accept our devotion!

### LETTER X.

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Ellisburgh, N. Y.

Money, money, money! Dear Jane, be still; don't speak it loud! I've locked it all up in a trunk—hid the trunk, and the key I carry with me. Why—O! I don't feel it in my pocket! Can it be I've lost it? O! if some thief took it when I was not thinking! Oh! if—he has got it, and taken my money! There—I've found it! I was so startled with a fear that it was gone, that I could scarcely find it. Be careful that there is no one with you when you read this—some robber looking over your shoulder. I put my hand over it all just as fast as I write. If it should get stolen, I am sure I should be ruined. I wish I could keep it all to myself about my money, but I can't; I must tell it to somebody, and I will tell it to you, dear Jane. I have delivered all my books here and there, and after ten days of real hard labor, I have fifty dollars, besides paying the publishers fifty, which is their due. Are they not noble men, to give me half, if the people do say that they set the price of their books too high, and the agents get scoldings, and they try to beat us down? 'Tis all the people's fault, I know. I can't help what they say about the good publishers' policy. I don't believe they have any; and I shall go and see them—a pleasure I have never enjoyed. I'm sure they will be delighted to see me!

But, dear Jane, I don't feel at all as I expected to, with so much money. Just think, fifty dollars!—more than I ever had before. O me! if I had been teaching, I should have 49 been months getting it, and it would have been almost all gone—worn out in the labor. But what a curse came with my money—a new care I never felt before. I had thought I would never care about it, if it did get stolen—I would leave it all to the fates. How willing are we to lose things when we haven't got them. Why, I guessed over and over about how much I should have when the books were sold, and really jumped with anticipated joy—had invested the expected capital in a variety of ways, and with all my calculations, however extensive, they never took half the amount. But now, when in the possession of the money, it does not nearly cover all I wanted to do, and yet—I don't see what it means! I was supposed to be good in ciphers, but I presume I haven't worked it by the right rule, as I can't make it

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cover all. I think I shan't use any till I make more; and, too, somehow I don't see so great a necessity of helping those that I supposed needed help;—I think, and really believe, they could help themselves, if they should try.

Hark! my sister is playing her melodeon in the parlor below. I begin to think my great hurry to send her to a music teacher is unnecessary. She plays very well—and, too, it is so pleasant to be self-taught, and so much better. Her voice is sufficient—she imitates, besides, the Barkers; and I am sure that's enough. Who would want, or expect to sing better than a concert singer? The melodeon sounds sweetly this morning—never better. I declare it is sweeter than a piano. I will broach the matter to her, and see if these are not all false wants. We are apt to be so unpractical, when we have nothing to do but dream.

Dear Jane, when I forget for a short time this new-born care that came with my money, I have most delightful dreams—and wide awake too; I have only to close my eyes, and I see the same beautiful things I saw in my childhood's visions; only now they come by money—by a practical 3 50 means. Then they came all at once—I don't know how—I guess, by wishing. Now, when I cease to dream, I don't care much about the reality; I conclude it is a bad way to spend one's money. I'll keep mine awhile; but I must certainly have a silk frock, if only to please my neighbors, who are always wondering that I never had one,—and past eighteen, too. I suspect it helps one into society to have a silk dress, and I know, too, that all the girls who wear silk have more beaux;—yes, I shall get me one, and it will give me an appearance, which I have been told I greatly lack. I don't wish to spend much of my money in dress; I want a home of my own—a whitewashed cottage. The people think woman need earn only enough to dress pretty, and no matter if she does get such low wages, that it takes her all the time to earn that.

Daughters of rich fathers are dressed, and do nothing but keep themselves pretty—to be looked at, I suppose. What a waste of precious life! What folly that there exists beauty without usefulness! What sample have we in nature of any thing being created to be looked upon, because of its beauty, and to be served by others to sustain it? Even the

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flowers have their mission. So many of our ladies stand like poppies, to be taken; some appear drooping and pale, some come out in dashing colors with high heads, and some wear curls, have black roguish eyes, shake their little heads, and laugh: they must be taken—who could refuse? Others are variegated, not very beautiful, but they imitate those that are; but you know imitations are not real, not beautiful. Many are not nourished on the ground they fell, and they must seek some one to take them—not very particular who, if they are furnished with apparel, as the lilies of the field, that neither toil nor spin. Dear Jane, I shall be like the poppies that hold their heads right straight up, and mind their own business—that neither smile nor bow, until they find one so pleasant they can't help it; for I could never see why we are obliged to put ourselves in such a pleasant fix to keep the lords of creation pleased, and then fail!—just as if their fancy was to be indulged more than our own. How absurd, that we are not of ourselves—were made more for them than they for us; that we must look and smile, even if they do frown—but never *vice versa* . What other animal presents such a paradox, that one dare not be themselves, for fear of displeasing! I am sure I shall behave just as they always may expect, when they first meet me. They, too, must support us—get us our frocks when they think we need them!

If I get a fortune—and I expect I shall—and a husband too, he need not fear when he asks me for a pair of new boots, that I shall say—“It seems to me you wear out boots very fast;” and, with such a caution, he can think of nothing but how long his boots will last. Or, if he wants a new coat—“Why, where is that coat I got you last winter?”—Just as if a winter coat would answer for summer! No, no; I will tell my good little man all about my pecuniary affairs—a matter I know he can understand, and he will limit his wants according to his means; for who ever knew so sensible a being as a man to make a bankrupt of his household? I wonder if women would not be as sensible, and comprehend the business, if their husbands would keep them posted up in the costs of living, as I am going to, my husband! Oh! the world will see what a paragon of a family mine will be, when I get my fortune. When I'm talking, he won't look at me with “a husband's eye,” as if I had better

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stop, or fairly tremble with fear at what I should say next; and if I chat right friendly with the stronger sex, he will not imagine I am going to elope, and leave him without support.

Dear Jane, I think *now*, I shall be perfectly willing that he should chat and laugh with the ladies, for it always makes 52 such a fuss to break up old habits—long-standing customs. We can't expect the dear men to conform all at once; but we have great facility of quietly stepping into newly-acquired liberties. Woman has such tact! This great cry about woman's rights—I am really wearied with it. Don't they know it can be only a theory—that it will be a sword suspended by a single hair over their own heads, unless they have money? To have money and to know one's wants, is, to have all the rights that are granted to mankind. Money! money! thou god of power—let me go and count mine again!

### LETTER XI.

Canada.

I am in the queen's dominions. It was known from my birth, that I was to eat bread in two kingdoms. The fates pronounced it, and they conferred as a seal of the promise “two crowns on my head”—an emblem always given to designate those on whom the favor is bestowed, especially. But without any heartiness, yet to prove true the sign, they have now packed me off to Canada, when, years ago, they half promised that I should visit the Oriental world—the Eastern kingdoms; and once when I had nothing to do but listen to their soft words and fair stories, they flattered me that I should attend the queen's court, receive homage from all, confer favors in return, and when wearied with these, should be chosen by one of her lords, and we were to travel. But the fates are like mortals, when in a fond mood, brushing about the work just finished, they anticipate high prospects, as the fancy is pleased with its fairness. But time mars the old, and fairer beings are created; and like a wearied 53 mother, to release herself from teasings, and keep true a promise, made from the impulse of love, sends her children off with the least trouble and expense, even



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if they grumble all the way there, and return unsatisfied. But she has redeemed her word, and they must yield respect.

Dear Jane, on my way here, I came by Sackett's Harbor, spent a few days with my cousins, as you know I have a host of them. The good Emma, that we always called the guardian angel of the family, sends her kindest regards to you, and desires to know when she may expect that promised visit from you. Clit has a snug little nest of her own, and her accepted mate sings well now; but the honey-moon is not over yet. Clit will make him sing longer, if any one can—the stubborn sex! She is exceedingly domestic, a trait that stands first in the order of domestic bliss; and most charming too is the characteristic—it blesses all! In one of her girlish extravagances of the admiration of housework, she exclaimed, “O, what music there is even in dishwater!” as one white plump hand held the dish, and the other brought the dripping dishcloth from the curling suds. Ah! you darling cousin, you have the charm of life in your possession—to find music in home duties, so befitting woman's character, and her “proper sphere,” too! She also takes great delight in observing rising bread, baking pies to see the crust flake, boiling sugar, preparing sweetmeats.

The whole household know that order is the first law of nature, and must be obeyed—and yet she is so kind! She has a great partiality for reading long sermons and moral lectures, written for the rising youth, in which she takes great interest. The cooking book is duly studied, and every member of the family has justice done them, especially in eating, except “pa,” who always gets the largest piece of pie and cake, and somebody else, who used to be there occasionally. I am afraid that she will spoil him now by giving him a whole 54 pie. I have cautioned her, as I have observed that it spoils young husbands to humor them; they never get over it, and, like all petted things, grow more difficult to please. But she tells me to always feed them on the best, and they will never find out that they are petted. But I fear the philosophy; I don't think I shall try it. It may do when the husband is out of humor, as good living is usually resorted to for making up a family quarrel; a good plan to fill the stomach full of sweetmeats to produce a reconciliation. Dear Jane, I have

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planned a regimen that I shall put into practice in the beginning—a use of one's common sense, if it is an unpleasant antidote at first. When he finds how inexorable I shall be, why, what else can he do but submit to the good law and its magistrate? But what an idea, to feed them on sugar plums to show our love and keep the immortal ones pleasant!

And here is coz. Jane, proud and stately—treads the earth so loftily as if it were for nothing else—compares well with a Juno—better fitted for the companion of a Jupiter than a mortal. She could daintily sip nectar from the cup of the gods, and appear as if it were nothing. The lofty majestic being! I do not really like such majestic women; one can't love, if they admire them. They do not warm and call forth the generous love of mankind—a mission woman fills so beautifully on the earth. All my cousins and kin are blest with some peculiar characteristic, that saves them from the common. Is not that enough, and all that one can expect in this age? One's relations! It is always allowable to speak praisingly of them, especially if we can attribute any distinguishing mark to our progenitors. One at least feels very careful of what is said of them.

I attended a circus at Sackett's, although I was told it was very wrong to attend such a place, by a good Methodist minister; but I thought it was not, and assured him that the 55 ton of the place were going, as I had heard it expressed by several school misses, that were greatly delighted with the idea. I thought if they went, I could. But the good man shook his head and pronounced it wrong, a dreadful sin. But as the ton went, I went, and was highly delighted to see such perfect bodies. I should have thought they were of another species—if at all akin to us. Such full chests and straight forms—so perfectly developed. I saw man physically a glorious being, unlike the feeble forms we see all around us, narrow chests, soft, shrivelled muscles, and morbid circulation. If I should express all my admiration in viewing so perfect a physical organization, you might think I saw with an exaggerated eye, and that the jumping, leaping bodies had quite fascinated me. Really they did. I think their capacity for jumping not undesirable, when it causes

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and sustains health; and the beauty of motion, too, greatly pleases me, as nature's development does every where.

It is to be regretted that one must go to the circus, or to some public exhibition, to witness such feats, and particularly to find the workmanship of God in its perfectness as manifested in the physical being I grew quite sensitive, and have promised a reform for myself, first, by sitting and standing erect. As a nation, we are exceedingly narrow in the chest, and I find that a stooping position obstructs the process of digestion; and I am half inclined to think it produces palpitation of the heart. I am already benefited, and when I get a little more experience, shall proclaim to my sex, especially to mothers; but I would recommend them to attend a circus and behold a practical demonstration. To be practically taught benefits more than all the lessons given by one that has been led to "a knowledge of the truth," by her infirmities. We are spoiled from our childhood by sleeping on large pillows and high bolsters. I often wonder that we 56 are not entirely hunchbacked. But true to her work, nature ever strives for the right.

I saw nothing else that interested me particularly, but some very fine horses of various sizes. A few of them were noted for human knowledge. I don't remember what human things they did; but haven't you often seen horses and dogs that looked quite as intelligent as their masters, and much more benevolent? I thought it a poor compliment to the wit of the ton, who laughed, or affected to, at the stale fun of the clown. How truly its want of genuiness, contrasted with the worth and beauty of spontaneous emotions, which come fresh from the heart, whether in wit or seriousness, joy or sorrow. Nothing but the real can excite the real, the genuine; a fact in nature that might benefit our young ladies who desire to please.

Sacketts Harbor is a place of some celebrity. The "old ship-house" has been preserved with care, and fitted up with a degree of taste The garrison, erected here in the last war, adds much to the gayety of the place, and is the object of its chief interest, particularly when regiments of the army are stationed here. There is great commotion with the

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mothers of marriagable daughters, when the officers make their debut among the fair citizens; and neither are the misses wholly indifferent. It has a good harbor, and the view of the pleasant Lake Ontario from every part of the place is charming;—a sunset scene is glorious.

I took a boat from Sacketts Harbor to Kingston, called the Cataract; a beautiful vessel it seemed to me as it glided on the blue waters. It was a rich July day, the atmosphere was so quiet and hazy, and a gentle breeze played over the lake; the earth, sky, and every living animal and plant seemed to have reached their beauty and glory:—stood still to be blessed and receive the benediction, “it was good.” I belong to that class of travellers who are looking for the rare beings of any order that may present themselves, but have not acquired <sup>57</sup> that ease of seeing without appearing to see, which comes from much travelling. In my passage I was interested in five young colored men, who were concert singers; they also played the piano, bass-viol and violin. I had just read “Uncle Tom's Cabin,” and supposed I loved the whole race so well I could clasp them all in my arms; but as I came into their presence my generous feelings partly vanished, perhaps simply from the reason that I was entirely unaccustomed to the sight of black faces. After rallying my democracy and independence, I took an opportunity of conversing with one, whom I had observed reading Macaulay's Essays. I found him to be a young man of much intelligence and refinement, and vastly superior to the many I meet daily; his knowledge embraced a wide range of history and philosophy, and he was capable of close investigation and reasoning; he was conversant with the writings of many distinguished men, and expressed much satisfaction with the views of Jefferson respecting his race. He ascribed the bondage of his people to a Providential dispensation, that in the end would prove a benefit and blessing.

Massachusetts was the home of these young men; and their father and mother were born free. I inquired in what manner he expected to benefit his people most. He answered by the highest development of himself—to demonstrate their capability. While conversing, a splendidly dressed person, having the appearance of a gentleman, stepped between the

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two brothers and threw his hands heavily on the shoulder of each. At first I took him as their friend, but he soon made some rude inquiries, and then with a self-satisfied knowing smile, another slap on the shoulders, letting his hands remain, said, in a tone that made my heart ache and blood boil, "I have sold many a finer fellow than you, South," and continued, "I have been South several winters dealing in slaves." Then came the long harangue, that "the whole 3\* 58 race were made for nothing else—just right—the only way to manage them," that "they know but little more than the brutes." How my heart desired that the slave-dealer had but the capability of appreciation, and I could have eloquently drawn the contrast between him and the colored brother by his side, who endured with a quiet firmness all his insult—if a mean man can insult. It was not because they were black that I would have shown the contrast, but I felt, as I exclaimed, "how can you trample on one's self-respect thus?" I saw that the creature did not understand what self-respect meant, and thought perhaps his had been benumbed in infancy, or he had the misfortune of never inheriting any.

But, dear Jane, I am pained so often with this trespassing on other's self-respect; it is not only man towards man, but in the treatment of children. Their self-respect is continually outraged by parents, teachers and others who mingle with them. It arises most from thoughtlessness and impatience. How many have not seen their children crushed, broken-hearted, even to tears, bitter tears, from words or acts that injure their self-respect! A dog, or an inferior animal, kicked by his master in a freak of ill-temper, feels shamed and hurt; 'tis a long while before he can look honest and trusting again. Ah! if we would guard each other's self-respect, we should exhibit a nobler people! It must influence the character of the man for good, if his self-respect is cherished in his childhood, and the harmony of society would exhibit the effects. If chords were strung across the earth, mingling the harmonious and discordant, how careful we should be not to touch the discordant ones. And if these chords that affect the visible harmony of the world are not perceptible to the touch, they are none the less apparent in their effects, and traced as easily to the cause.

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In landing at Kingston I noticed that the people seemed 59 remarkably well-conditioned physically, of much corpulency with very little agility. They appeared to be well based on this *terra firma*, and could withstand much battling from the elements. At a glance one would decide that they were nourished by substances that gave bulk and stolidity, rather than nerve and poetry—that their brains were not cudgelled to exhibit the latent thought and imagination that might have existed in them; neither would they become warmed and enthusiastic by the emanations from others. Some of the functionaries had very large noses,—that were a bright red. Every feature and movement was indicative of personal importance and royal dignity. Would you not like to enjoy a position that gives such ease and self-complacency? We poor ones look up for others to smile first, before we dare; and trembling after we are licensed, for fear we smiled a little too much.

As I was ordering my trunk to be taken to the hotel, a dignitary stepped up, inquiring its contents with an authority which, if he had demanded me to yield it up as his rightful property, I could not have resisted, or scarcely thought it otherwise than right. The authority he exercised reminded me of the proper relation to exist between parent and child. There was no insolence in the command; I felt impressed that it was his right, and for once I stood the child of obedience, answering his questions with all truthfulness. After satisfying his lordship, I passed on with my guide, the porter, to the hotel, that was kept by a New-Yorker, but who, from a long residence here, had become fully Canadianized. The house was generously furnished, but was shockingly deficient in cleanliness, that genuine cleanliness which promotes comfort and health, and is conducive of refined thoughts and feelings.

Kingston looks as though it might endure a second flood and not be moved, and receive much Yankee shot before it 60 would penetrate. All the buildings have a huge, massive appearance, with but a little of the ornamental attached; and one moves among them with a feeling that they are stationary. You know that in our cities and towns every object around seems movable, so full of life; one feels it emphatically so after coming here.

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Their edifices wear an unfinished stateliness, and our buildings, compared with them, dwindle into play houses, with all the finery hung out. A few had the finish that made me feel the grandeur and endurance of temples made by human hands; the towers, and all the government buildings possessed great strength, and cast a gloomy shade around, that personified to me the meaning of the word war—the deepest impression of which I ever before had was produced by a body of gayly dressed soldiers marching to martial music, the harmony of which always thrills me with thoughts and feelings of heaven. One of the towers threw such a dark, deep shadow around, that I drew back with a shudder, and my imagination pictured the beautiful form of the unhappy and fated Mary Queen of Scots, confined in a like tower, and doomed to sorrow and early death to gratify human glory. Human glory! who are its worshippers? Do the worshipped comprehend the true praise—they that receive the homage? Who gives glory to another, because of the glory? Who that pays devotion at the shrine of glory—to the height of position which another occupies, would not hurl the favored one from the place, if they themselves could become the stronger party? Those indifferent to filling the place never give flattery or do homage. Envy is the food that glory feeds on, and the earth has drunk the blood of thousands to gratify its victims. I left the tower with a solemn sadness; reveries of the past came over me, with its heathenism, bloodshed, and the cravings after power. I prayed the Lord such scenes may never darken again our bright and happy earth.

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The inhabitants here present a heaviness of movement almost to stupidity; none of the rattle and go ahead that mark our people, but a plodding on, as there exists but little of the poetry of feeling that enters every thing done among us. I saw ladies dressed in rich and gay apparel, but with such a combination of colors as would make some of our critics exclaim, “what a want of taste!” On closer observation it seemed in keeping with their bearing; for they presented a strength and markedness of feature almost to coarseness, compared with our delicate ones. Less enthusiasm of feeling is manifest in their expression, with more positiveness in the acts of life. One reason the city looks so

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prison-like and over substantial for our world, is its nakedness of shrubbery; from this I infer that a love of the beautiful is not commingled enough with the substantial.

I found it almost a universal practice for the wives and daughters of tradesmen to attend shop, and assist in many employments that are followed exclusively by the other sex among us. There are many blacks here, but they do not appear so happy as I supposed they would from what I had read in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, nor as cheerful and joyous a race as I had always fancied. They looked ill-tempered and dejected, and it was quite perceptible that they were used "as menials," and not welcome, even at that.

When I returned to the hotel from my ramble a team was standing before it, ready to move; the wagon was a rough, heavy one, covered with copper-colored cloth, and reminded me of those we used to see in our childhood, and supposed they contained a family emigrating to the West. I was told it was the stage, waiting for me, as it was known I desired a passage. I expressed surprise at such unaccustomed kindness, and thanked the driver most cordially, thinking how unlike the Yankees, where one had to be on hand at least ten minutes previous to the time, and get into the coach before the horses are attached, to save the necessity of a quick spring, and being seated before one is ready, from a snap of the whip and a leap of the horses.

The stage was well filled; there was only one lady beside myself. At my appearance as a passenger, inquiries were made in a variety of tones and brogues, as each did his best to accent in English, "Where would you like to sit?" One son of Erin, who so gracefully lifted his hat, with a bow and smile that could not have failed to elicit a kind emotion from a heart of stone, uttered in gushing, musical tones, "You swate cratchur, I don't see how you can be comfortable." I assured him I should be very comfortable, which I really was on the backless seats, and felt how little affects the comfort, externally, when one is in the sunshine of warm and generous hearts.



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I suppose you are thinking I was greatly cheered by such a sweet compliment, that was given from the spontaneous flow of his Irish nature. Yes; you know every one is pleased with compliments, and it is decidedly so of our sex particularly; and why should we not be? Do you not suppose that I was sweeter from being called so? If I had been called ugly—just look at my eyes and my pouting lips; but as it was, I felt very pleasant towards the gentleman, for of course I believed him. Did you ever know any one to disbelieve an agreeable compliment, however homely, or unworthy of it? With all I became very happy, and I thought, very interesting; and concluded from my whole heart, that the Canadian gentlemen were the gems of their sex. I suppose discreet young ladies would have frowned at such a compliment; but how could I, when I was so pleased? I suppose I *should* have put all conversation bestowed on me to silence, by a decided mumness. But I have yet to learn, that woman can sustain her purity, or benefit her race most, by such seclusion of herself from those to 63 whom she has not had a formal introduction. It is but little behind the Turkish women, who enshroud themselves in thick veils, and no one beholds their faces. I “*guess*” our men would not like it much, never to see our faces; they would all run crazy, I know. Just think of it—I can hardly breathe. And why should we keep our thoughts to ourselves any more than to wear thick veils, to which every body would object, particularly pretty young ladies! Of course, some could be excused from talking; for we would be very democratic, and not wish ladies to talk, or try to, who are as likely to half titter and giggle—a way they always assume to be agreeable—whether listening to a rehearsal of serious or amusing incidents—it is all the same to them, and say, “thank you,” when one is conversing of the state of the weather.

After a ride of twenty miles we neared the little village, the place of our destination for the night, and the end of the stage route, at about ten o'clock in the evening. I was carried to a house in the edge of the village, where I had only to give my name to receive a hearty welcome. Hospitalities had been exchanged between the families, because of a marriage in the family with a relation of ours, although they had never been opened to any extent with either family. I entered, gave my name, and was greeted with a warm shake of the

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hand from mother and daughter, who were the only members of the household that had not retired. They immediately commenced preparing me some supper, although I told them I did not want any; but as I had not been to tea, they knew I must be hungry, and took all my objections as the effect of bashfulness and becoming modesty. The more I desired not to eat any thing, the more they insisted, and to bring the matter to a close, as I hoped, I accepted a bowl of bread and milk; and then I must have my bowl filled again and again, and new slices of bread were added to a plate 64 already filled, which I could not have devoured when spurred by my most ferocious appetite. The last words I heard uttered on retiring were, "You will starve, I am sure,—you haven't eaten half enough to keep you from starving!" Was I among a race of gormandizers? Ah no! I had heard the same expressions from very small eaters—only a weak way of showing one's generosity—a desire to make you at home and a welcome to enough. It comes to me as really vulgar, and I shall be glad when the taste of the people gets cultivated above such vulgarity; and too, dear Jane, it was so cruel to wake me up to eat bread and milk, when I didn't want any! I could have borne mine stoically, without saying one word, if the world had never received worse injuries from the same cause.

### LETTER XII.

Canada.

After yawning, sleep; "after weariness, rest;" after evening, morning; and mankind go to their labors. Some with a glad, cheerful heart, rejoicing in life, and thanking God for existence. Morning to such is the beginning of new life, new hopes and aspirations; others arise with a heavy heart, as if a millstone were hung about their neck, dreading the day's life, which presents nothing clear before them—wish it were past. Thus it was with me the next morning after my arrival here. It had been a long time since I had labored in my agency; but I was here for that purpose, and had nothing else left me. The time had come which had been contemplated so calmly, because the evil day was afar off. I took my box of books, and started for a small place called Newburgh, two miles distant. The reason

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of my seeking this place for the commencement of my labor, was because I was told it 65 was settled with Yankees; not that I am so wonderfully partial to the Yankees, only when I find them abroad, or when they are disparagingly represented—a species of local patriotism common to all nations.

On the way, I found rich lands in a high state of cultivation, and large, massive stone houses, which betrayed the wealth of the owner. I approached the first one with a faltering spirit. I knew I should have no success. I had the presentiment strongly impressed—it could not be otherwise—heard a voice saying, “You will do nothing—give it up.” I thought I would heed it—turned, and stood still. But what could I do—what excuse render for the retreat? Then came another voice, saying, “You might try it—a refusal can be borne.” I went in, and told the pleasant lady my business. She could not have taken a book, if she had wanted one—my very voice forbade it. I knew she would not, and my despair was visible with the will.

There is no philosophy in sadness—down-heartedness. How rarely the sympathies are touched by sorrow. We give to the afflicted, we speak words of condolence and consolation, but they touch not the heart; the gift may effect comfort for the body, and the mind recognizes it with gratitude, but the heart only moves—responds fully and joyfully to gladness. True philosophy belongs solely with happiness. Real gushing, laughing souls, bring trophies of love from all hearts. They have but to appear, and the meed is laid at their feet; and who does not love to place even the crown on their heads? They have but to enter, and the whole citadel is theirs. Heigh-ho for joy! I'll put on the armor and wear the helmet of unfailing success—the talisman that leads through darkness unto the bright shore—the glorious land—the Canaan, unharmed; that turns life into a blooming Eden, and one's self into a rose, or a bird of Paradise that sings everlastingly! Yes, she is mine, she is mine—the 66 angel Joy. I felt her wing fan my cheek, and the angelic smile fell on my lips—the bright heavenly spark relit my eye—the glowing love of divinity rekindled in my soul. Every pulsation of life moved to high inspiration—a radiance shone round about me, and other spirits, blessed with this glory, were drawn by kindred sympathies, and

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rejoiced. Rich success was mine, as I welcomed the angel Joy. I met those whom she dwelt not with, and their hearts were tinged with darkness; but the light from the good angel within reflected on them, as I sat in their presence; a transparency like a ray of sunlight illumined their faces, and I left, blest and blessing. Hospitalities were extended to me as if an angel was entertained; and so it was, for the angel Joy was with me—kindled the raptures in my soul, and shed a halo of love and good will on all. Oh, beautiful angel, Joy! Shall I again refuse thy presence—neglect thy offered light, that beautifies and moves life so gloriously? Canst thou not make a habitation in my soul, that shall ever be filled with thy bright presence? O, chain me to thee by the silken cords which make thyself the harmony of thy works!

“When night had let her curtain down, and pinn'd it with a star,” I went to the home of a lady whom the angel Joy had loved and kissed so long, that her face seemed as an angelic mirror, and a divine light appeared to envelope her whole being. Dear Jane, if you could have seen me as I rested in the arms of good Morpheus, after a day of such unbounded success and happiness! I am sure there played around my mouth a firm and generous smile—an expression that I was pleased with the world, and had just stepped on its stage to play nobly and vigorously my part. Amen! And there was day and night—morning and evening—and God saw it was good.

Are you not greatly interested in young wives? I am. And would you not like to hear something of my hostess and her home,—as she is one of that class? I'll just speak of her husband too, though I do not converse much with him. I find that when husbands are truly devoted to their wives, they are not so fond of saying such sweet things to young ladies, remarking, occasionally by way of compliment and to secure the confidence of their hearers, how much they admire the sex; and that woman has such unbounded power over them—could lead them to the ends of the earth. Have their wives found this out? The true husband esteems the whole sex so kindly, like a noble brother. His words are truthful, and come from a pure heart; there is honor in the very tone of his voice, and one feels that he is woman's protector—would sustain all her rights, as he clearly sees rights are without

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sex—a harmonious unity. Somehow it is my fate to be always falling in love with married men—such married men! I only wish I could fall in love oftener. This newly married couple are descendants of the English. I will give you a view of them and their home, as I found them when I returned in the evening, as their invited guest, while I remained in the place. Dear Jane, I am so delighted with them, there is danger of exaggeration; so I will turn my telescope and view them at a distance. You have read in books, of white cottages with open porches and white pillars, with green running vines twining round and round them, and hanging in sweet festoons, down from the roof, when tired of running; and, too, they were shutters for the windows; a pretty door-yard, with roses, lilacs, and the snow-ball,—a sweet-briar bush in a secluded corner,—don't go near it, you will get your frock torn and pierce your fingers with its ugly thorns. Why is it, that such a pretty fragrant thing should have such cruel thorns? I never could see! A few trees in the yard, half grown, and soft mossy grass covered the earth; I never understood how it was always grown just so high and no higher. Ours always grew right straight up, as if it was 68 in a meadow, and when it was cut, it was sharp stubble and hurt the children's feet. A few boxes of evanescent flowers stood here and there, and there was a small arbor on which drooped the cypress. Back of the cottage was the vegetable garden, and the generous vine of the ever-enduring and ever-spreading bitter-sweet ran over each side of the fence, undecided on which side to stop,—like mortals always desiring to be on the other side; but unlike them, leaving the mark of its fickleness. In neighboring groups were the potato, tomato, beet, turnip, onion, and the long-pod bean, with the tempting red cheeked pepper—to the unknown—pretending to hide itself among the thick green leaves. 'Tis all true, dear Jane, just as we have read in books—I've seen it.

As I enter the cottage, don't imagine that I shall present the presiding fairy to you, as a small figure, with slender waist, that has been compressed until half its vitality is destroyed, and the natural beauty quite gone—with a little head covered with curls, and the only expression that marks the fair face was merely an education of the feelings. The husband, too, sitting from the indulgence of his little wife, with his hat on one side, half

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slid out of his chair, smoking a cigar and taking comfort—the wife sitting near by, looking a kind participation in it; for, of course, she would have him happy. If smoking made him happy, he should smoke and chew too; if it were disagreeable, and the smoke made her deadly sick, she would get over it—patient creature! No, no; forget so familiar and vulgar a scene; but behold the goddess of this household, of large, generous stature, well proportioned, and at the age of full maturity, with none of nature's energies trampled on. Her clear, thoughtful eye told of a clearer judgment, and a capability of using reason; each glance betrayed the intelligence of feeling that dwelt within, and the whole face beamed with generous love. When I entered, the husband stood with one hand resting 69 on the wife's chair, and their voices mingled in harmonious music; they seemed lost in the rapture of song brought forth by their well-trained voices. An elderly lady sat near by, a happy listener. The table was spread for the evening's repast, but not groaning beneath a loaded variety.

I will not enter into a detail of the house within; every thing was well regulated, and arranged with taste. I need not tell you of a green-covered sofa that stood in one corner, a sweet, lively carpet on the floor, and the simplicity of all. The clock that stood on its stand was not made by Yankee steam, to go only by jerks, and silent half the time—the dishes were not moulded in imperfect forms, and disfigured with fractures; neither was the table standing steadily on one leg, and then only as chips were placed under the others.

The books had not bright, cheap covers, with gilt tops, which always lie towards one to conceal the sham, and make one look instinctively to see what else is false. No. No one of a disciplined mind and cultivated taste could endure such pretence; and their love of justice would not allow them to patronize such bungling, and thus countenance lazy, clumsy workers. At tea I heard no apologies, with “I don't know that I have any thing you can eat;” or, when I spoke to the husband, the lady ask, “Is your tea out?” nor was I urged to eat more after I had done.

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I was introduced to the elderly lady as the husband's mother, who was in declining health. She was busily knitting, like all good mothers and grandmothers; yet not like some whom I have seen, whose souls seem knit into the stocking, and looked as if they were good for nothing else—and had to think how much work they must do to make themselves acceptable to those with whom they are to spend the remnant of their days.

Poor mothers, it is all your fault! The gay girl frittered 70 away the spring-time, dreaming life was only to please, as the butterfly pleases, when we exclaim “How pretty!” The summer came, with nothing to ripen but vanity; for nothing else was sown; and at the harvest, nothing to reap but the fruit of vanity, which is sorrow—a broken heart and a miserable old age. She was not the wise woman that “buildeth her own house;” her children did not rise up and call her blessed—she gave them not wisdom, for it was sealed unto her; she had never sought it. But, like the foolish, her house was built on the sand; the winds blew, and the floods came, and it fell, because it was not founded on the rock.

The mother in whose presence I sat, personified the wisdom and goodness of her life; an expression of contentment rested on her noble face; her influence was felt and acknowledged by the man, in his deference to her opinions, and his attention to her every want. If you could have witnessed the good-night parting, as he kissed her wrinkled brow, after we had knelt for the blessing of God, you would have felt the worth of a good mother.

Dear Jane, how I regretted leaving this paradisiacal home, when my business was no longer an apology for me to remain. Oh! I shall be so glad when I get such a home! I shall never leave it. My husband won't want to either.

### LETTER XIII.

Canada.

Some parts of Canada present rich soil and finely cultivated farms. I saw extensive wheat lands, some sixty acres in a field, but the crop promises very light this year, and also the

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grass, from the exceeding heat and dryness of the season. There is much wood land yet to be cleared for farming land, 71 which is being done rapidly now, too rapidly. Brush and log heaps were set on fire at the beginning of the dry weather, and from the long drought the flames have spread, and continue to baffle the power of man to subdue them. The sufferers declare seriously, that the world will be burned up. It is a fine sight to see the fire playing with an extensive forest; but the black dismal stubs left, make one feel that the element has played out of its natural place, thus to mar earth's beauty and despoil the calculations of man. Like all powerful agents of great good, out of its sphere, it is productive of great evil.

The lumbering business here, is carried on extensively; the rivers are filled with floating logs, which are wafted down with the rise of the water. Now they are still, and wedged together, and it would not be known that they lay in water, if the river was not seen at the rapids. It must be a grand sight, to see them drifted along, and a welcome one to the owners. It was a query with me how each man knew his logs—so many together, and alike; but each woodman carved his mark. Large bodies of men go into deep forests up the streams, pitch rude tents, remain several months, and fell and launch this timber, ready for the spring freshets. Oh! wouldn't it be charming to rusticate thus a few months in the wild wood! I believe I shall volunteer, for of course they would like a cook.

The creak of the saw-mill, and the buzzing of the shingle-making machinery, are heard from different points, as they are numerous along the river; and clean new boards are piled up in a triangular figure, as we built our cob-houses, when, in the autumn evenings, our fathers brought to the kitchen a basket of corn to shell for hominy. Didn't the sight of them, with the huge basket hoisted on the shoulder, promise us a rich evening, unless some of us quarrelled about which cob belonged to us, as he threw out one by one 72 when the corn was shelled off—then we were told to go to bed. Oh! how we wished we hadn't quarrelled! And we looked—"please let us stay, we won't do so again!" But the command had been given, and we reluctantly went to bed—soon forgot our sorrow in building air-



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castles—just like all philosophic grown girls and boys. How I thank God for my childhood, and for this period of my life too; it is all so rich when I desire to do good.

On my way to a little town by the name of Nappanee, I saw women and girls helping their husbands and brothers to make hay; I wish you could have seen their robust forms, rosy cheeks, and stout arms—they were so full of life, and the blood appeared ready to burst through their ruddy skins. They did not run, as I saw some young ladies do near home, when I caught them milking; and I suppose these would not have run, if they had known I had become a book pedler. I accosted several of these hay-making damsels, who were laboring near the road side; they did not appear ashamed—why should they? One gave me water to drink in a gourd shell; I desired some seed, and to raise gourds, but they had none; “that one had been grown many years.” What a pity that the seed is becoming scarce, and gourds going out of use! I found but few of these maidens who could read, and none that cared about it. How much it is to be regretted that manual labor and study are not combined! But, thank God, examples are found in which they are united, and they represent the real gems of character—the nobility of human nature. But, to her credit, one of these pretty girls desired a work on etiquette. I offered to furnish her with a book entitled, “A Voice to Youth,” containing valuable lectures to both sexes; she blushed, and coyly asked if it told any thing about how young ladies should behave in the society of young gentlemen? I answered, I thought one's common sense and nature attended to that, without the aid of books: but I found that she wanted the rules of etiquette as practised in high life. The first steps towards refinement and cultivation are dress and appearance, all true to nature; but why do so many of our young ladies stop there? I do not think it nature to desire no further advancement.

Some of the Canadians look upon Yankees, that come among them, as a family does upon a large rat entering their room—as every body is afraid of rats—anxious to get it out, yet fearful to make the effort; keeping the eye on it, shivering with terror—with hurried glances around to see what it could take or spoil when it moved. The poor rat, tired of being looked at, from their magnetism, and wishing to render itself less obnoxious, and

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show they need not fear a rat, moves towards them; but, instead of quieting, throws them into a perfect tremor; when all at once they jump up, and scream as if they were bitten, and the frightened rat takes its exit. Then such a searching to see what had been taken! Something must be! What was the creature in there for, if not to slip something away by a magic they are supposed to possess? Cunning rat!

I heard dreadful stories of how they had often been served by Yankees, and Yankee book pedlers, too. The women told me that Yankees came over and married Canadian girls, got their money—then were gone; and soon the intelligence came that they had large families in the States. Wicked, cruel men! From the number of these instances I heard, one would conclude it not a rare occurrence. I told the narrators of such disclosures, after one example I should think they would not dare to play with such dangerous animals, that break hearts, and steal their dollars. But they were not afraid! Who ever felt themselves in danger when danger is far off? We are always brave soldiers then! Several young ladies declared their preferences for a Yankee husband, and the general reason given for the fancy—“their wives did not have to milk, or work much.” I told them that most of the Yankee wives were true to their position—to their hard laboring husbands, and worked a great deal.

I find the masses are sighing for wealth—to get rid of labor, to shun responsibility, to move in style. The young man desires wealth, that he may ride in a splendid carriage, drawn by fine horses, live in a grand house, and make a display, which he now does to the best advantage his means will allow. Is it from a love of beauty, to gratify a refined taste, that these desires exist? No. It is for the world to behold. Poor ones! they do not consider how much good they can do, or how much their souls need knowledge to correct the judgment and the desires, and fit them for a true appreciation of life. The young woman desires the same, and expects to secure all in the rich husband. What is the effect individually, and on society? The extravagance of style must be supported; all classes resort to unrighteous means to support the family in idleness. The husband is engrossed with cares, till he is growing old before the time of old age, and becomes sick of the heartless farce; but

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he must persevere. The wife neither feels nor knows the sickening pain of such traffic, and her gratified wants increase wants. The husband expostulates, reasons; but so little reason is developed in the wife, because she knows nothing of the expense of living from experience in the practical operations of life, she cannot appreciate his position, and he considers her a being to be governed. Govern a woman! the world has talked about it, but it has never been effectually done. If she is subjected by her position to the necessity of doing what she of choice would not, she slips around and balances it, by an act that makes it all up.

So, if the dear husbands wish to secure themselves, they must commence with their wives as if they were reasonable beings; for I truly believe they are, or might be. They should share in the responsibilities of life; they should be acquainted with the details of the incomes and outlays, and nicer and more careful bodies would never be met with than they. Their frocks and shoes would last longer than if they earned them themselves. For you understand the feelings of one who effects something for the interests and welfare of another. I suggest that the good husbands try the experiment. I think it will supersede our woman's rights movements, in all of us obtaining our rights.

The Canadians as a people, are, in many respects, a half a century behind the times. There is much quarrelling about trivial things; lawsuits are numerous among them; every month the judge of the court spends a day in each district, to settle disputes, which are so numerous that he is often obliged to give judgment without evidence; which, I believe, is usually satisfactory to both parties. For whoever knew any but wise judges! There is much more drunkenness, horse-racing, and profanity than "among the States' people" generally. In using tobacco, they do not exceed us; for how could they, when it is so universal? Much malice and revenge exists among them. Poor, innocent horses are found in the morning peeping through the cracks in the pound, hungry and lank, when it was well known that they had not been in the road during the night, only to get to the pound—then unwillingly led.

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The poor negro seems to be hated here. The white subjects do not carry out the generous love the queen has manifested in granting them a welcome in her dominions. In their social and political movements, there is but little harmony. I dare say, if the queen knew what disloyal subjects dwelt in her domain, she would disown them. If a wrong grows up among us, there springs up a body of reformers to root it 76 out; if they get too enthusiastic, and lose sight of first principles and discretion, another body arises to pull them down, and another circles them, and another circles, till all are circled, and we pray God circles the whole. It takes more to make a rich man here than with us; besides, they are not so careful to have all hung out, where it may be seen. How few among us live behind their income; how many just up to it, and what multitudes beyond it. Here, hospitality to strangers is unbounded. I believe the reason why there is so little hospitality among us, is the want of a true simplicity. So much parade for company; such an endless variety must be furnished. So much ado to make company happy. But I find the real art of making company happy, is for one to be at ease with themselves—do as they please, and encourage their guests to do the same.

### LETTER XIV.

Canada.

I waited two weeks for my books; the latter part of the time almost with impatience. The bill came to hand in due time, and I should have received the books earlier had there been no delay. I spent most of this time in the family with whom I first stopped. There had awoke eight sons, six of whom were stalwart youths. Some of them were over six feet high, and well proportioned; each had a strong hold on life, and the promise of a multitude of years. One was injured somewhat by overworking, of which he tells as if he ought to be crowned with honor above all men—unless there be a few equally deserving from the same cause. In pity for him, I made a very earnest speech upon the thoughtlessness of parents in overworking their children before they 77 are grown; but he quickly informed me it was not his parents; “they tried to stop me, but I and John worked at a race, and I beat. For two

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years I never did a day's labor—besides, a dreadful sickness.” He recounted the act with as much pleasure as a revolutionary soldier does his battle scenes. They think and act, as if the only glory of this life is work; and the necessities for eating and sleeping that had to be endured, were accepted with the unconsciousness of any purpose but to fit them for work. They managed a “terribly large farm;” and besides, did their own blacksmithing and shoemaking for both man and beast.

They had a saw-mill, a flour-mill, and a “carding and clothing machine.” Spinning and weaving are in full vogue. If every one did not do as they did—work just as hard—they were good for nothing. A dreadful denunciation was pronounced on those who printed newspapers and wrote books. I guess if they knew what hard work it is to write a book, they would never call an author lazy, but rather be thankful that they were not among the craft. Anybody that had only a patch of broadcloth on them, except Sundays, “felt big;” “and the whole learned world are a lazy pack living on our earnings.” Even the minister was considered a useless appendage—any further than to preach funeral sermons and perform the marriage ceremony. No one knew much but their “Bill,” who is a schoolmaster, because he “had a weak constitution, and took to learning.” Whenever he talked, which was seldom, it was on very important matters, and was always received as wisdom, with eyes and mouth wide open. The mother often shook her head sorrowfully, and said, “Bill won't live long; he'll kill himself studying such deep things;” and the family all looked as if they thought so too.

The father was remarkably pious; he had read the Bible through many times, was interested in ancient authorities, 78 read Josephus, Baxter's Saints' Rest, and Pilgrim's Progress. He owned a work on the Protestant persecutions, with pictures of the martyrdoms. The thoughts of them make me shudder now. He talked much on religion, and held family devotion, while the other members were apparently engaged in their own cogitations, often whispering to each other; but no reproof followed. Perhaps because they had a visitor they passed unnoticed; just as if visitors did not like to see the refractory punished, and justice done! The father believed that the only means of salvation was faith

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in the Lord Jesus, and that each one must be saved from his own faith; yet not one of his family was in the fold. I desired to know, and asked him what were his feelings respecting their condition. He answered with great solemnity and trust—"The Lord will convert them in his own good time." What inconsistency! What is religion? Is it a life spent almost without a thought of God, until near its close, and then to believe in him as a Saviour? Will he save such? Is not religion to guide and elevate this life? and cannot the child receive its sacred teachings and blessings? Does the parent discharge his whole duty by simply praying with his children, morning and evening, until they are hardened, abhor the very act, and absent themselves from the devotions at every possible chance, and then comfort himself with the idea that the Lord will convert them in his own good time? Has he nothing more to do? Can not religion be made so beautiful and practical, that all may see its excellencies, and acknowledge the Lord? And who shall do this work, but those who have received the Spirit?

The mother of these sons enters into their business calculations with the greatest zest. She never doubts the correctness of their opinions, and, good-mother like, she feeds them bountifully, and they express their gratitude by eating. 79 She serves them to the full extent of her capacity—cares for every article of her clothing, knows all about the growing crops, just how many bushels of wheat and corn they have raised in past years; and the weather is watched with the closest vigilance. If the cows "shrink" a pint of milk, she knows it. The height of the grass in the pasture is known to an inch. Her butter making was one of her hobbies; and she often told, with a peculiar tone and compression of the mouth, of the grand personages that get all their butter of her. And when she had done all these things, was it not enough? She thought so, surely.

It is said "there is a flower in every family," and I expect that one married my cousin. There is one that might claim to be the character of the family, and I think character applied thus, belonged to my every-day companion, the daughter. She is this side of forty. The decree is fully upon her to be an old maid. Poor thing! Her figure made me think of a tall waving poplar, deficient in some of its natural grace. She spun and wove all the cloth, made all

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the boys' shirts, trowsers, and jackets, although she never learnt the trade. She did all the milking, and had charge of the pigs and poultry. Such a useful member of the household could not be spared on any consideration, only in marriage. If death had taken Sally, they would have mourned the loss as dreadful; for how could her place be filled?

I became attached to Sally, and spent most of my time with her. I found she had much of the true experience of life, although she could scarcely read, and never read books. As I grew to love her, I tried to incite a desire in her to take hold of the higher aims of life—to convince her that all women who read books are not “lazy creatures, and do nothing, only dress, and try to get a husband;” for she thought to try to get the last named article was a terrible *mal-apropos*. Yet I observed that she manifested a degree of pleasure from the call of a young widower. I accompanied Sally to some of her out-door labors, which were exceedingly pleasant, although I could not always aid her. I found, from want of practice in milking, I had lost the necessary strength and tact to milk fast, and she said, “You will dry the cows all up!” looking so satisfied with her capability, and a pity for me.

That feeling is a most happy one, and exceedingly natural, to those who have true ideas of life. The power to do—to accomplish—the act that makes you self-reliant, delights more than the possession of thousands; it emboldens and ennobles the whole character, and gives an independence that a crown of gems could not bestow. When one feels its full power, they step from all bondage—no longer move with dread of what may come—the broad earth is theirs. To become self-reliant in one thing, fits one to become so in all they desire; and one thanks God so, from the whole heart, that He alone must be relied on—and has created material for the mind and hands to work with diligence. And who shall say that the vigorous Sally's pleasure in her superior strength and skill in these acts, is not as laudable and desirable as that of the lady who enjoys her self-reliance in music, in fine embroidery, or in wearing costly jewelry.

I often went with Sally to the river to scour yarn. She placed a large kettle upon two stones, which she filled with water, and then gathered flood-wood from the river banks, and built

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a fire under it. When she began to scour yarn, true to my nature, I scoured too, as I had done it many times; but Sally, looking out of the corner of her eye, said, "You will cockle the yarn all up—you don't know how." There it is again,—human nature! Almost every one that finds himself a little superior to another in any thing, allows nothing that he can do is right when done by others. Thus it was with Sally;—the only abuse of self-reliance! So I sat me down on the grass, where the wind did not blow the smoke, and talked and sermonized upon a variety of subjects. Sally would look at me as if I was deluded, from the enthusiasm I kindled in myself, and from the views I expressed; and when I pronounced the closing Amen, she looked Amen too. As Sally refused my aid, I joined with the mother; made bread, pumpkin pies, railroad cake and ginger snaps, which were all baked in a large brick oven out doors. But my fine cooking received no compliments from the sons, as they devoured one piece after another, as fast as they could, declaring "they are not half so good as mother's corn cake." The school-master, however, spoke up in a dignified nasal tone, "I presume it is better to change the diet occasionally for the mastifications of the digestive functions." When Sally found I could make dresses, bonnets, and cut any pattern by just seeing it, she exclaimed with astonishment, "What 'genus critters the Yankees be." Just what I wanted her to say, and then we went visiting together. Sally came out with a splendid silk frock on, and thick, coarse cowhide shoes;—O! Sally—I guess Sally knew best! Do you suppose she wanted to die young, as our young ladies do, from wearing thin shoes?

I grew so courageous under Sally's tuition that, when my books came, I hired a young horse that had been harnessed but two or three times, and went to distribute them. My wagon was called a "Black Board," a species of conveyance I think must have grown in Canada, and none of them ever exported. Its running gear was simple, with four wheels, on which was placed one wide, long board for the bottom, with a raised seat in the middle, and the whole painted black. I found it was truly a spring black-board—an uncouth, but comfortable conveyance.



I was successful in disposing of all my books I found only one lady here that sent me to her husband to see if she 4\* 82 could take one. I was not decided whether to advise her to go over to the "States," where she would find companionship, or remain here as a rarity. But, like all the class, she had, in appearance, lost the nobility which power to rule one's self gives—to act from one's own judgment—whether it be man or woman. To yield to circumstances in some instances never gives servility of manner; it is man's natural destiny since the fall of Adam; and to get brushed by the world, brightens the coin of human nature. But the power of mind over mind farther than its intuitive greatness, which rules imperceptibly, is an abomination unto the Lord. To rule by the force of greater physical power is brutal; to rule by the power of money is demoralizing and corrupting, and all that is gross.

I think the cause of the Canadian woman's independence is, in her being, in the true sense of the word, domestic; she lives more to herself and family,—she spends less time and thought for others' eyes, and acts as if she had an important work to accomplish in the home circle. I met with such agreeable English women, who, I believe, are truer to themselves than most American women. In them there is a simplicity and clearness of thought and act which is so captivating. Admitting that there is less poetry and gilding in their nature, it is only the real that pleases and endures. A clear-headed and cultivated woman, truly pious, thoroughly practical, and unfettered by conservatism, fresh, just what she is of herself, is the most divine being God ever created—and all the world concede to it

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### LETTER XV.

Cape Vincent, N. Y.

I am now in my own land again, after being six weeks in the Queen's territory. I came over from Kingston to Cape Vincent in a very small boat, connected with the railroad, called the

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"Lady of the Lake," a sweet little thing, that glided like a swan over the waters. I seated myself on the deck to observe the surrounding scenery, expecting to see any rare sight that might present itself to one's view without surprise,—so far away from home. But I saw only the green trees that covered the banks, the waters dotted here and there with little islands, and the white-capped waves rolling one after another, as if in a chase before a strong and steady wind that blew easterly; and occasionally a large fish leaped up in a graceful curve, and was gone again. I saw nothing of the miraculous, of which we often read in the narratives of travellers; I don't believe my telescope glass is of the right kind, or I have not strayed into the land of wonders.

The air and the whole scene unconsciously drew me to commune with the inner spirit; my eyelids closed, and the revery was fast on me, when a party of three came on the deck and seated themselves near by. My attention was arrested by their conversation, which was on woman's rights,—as if women did not have all their rights! I soon perceived that the gentleman was intent on convincing his fair hearers of the necessity of woman holding a position in the political world, and every where on an equality with man; but to fill each position in her own womanly way. That there is no institution, either private or public, complete without the equality of woman being recognized. And he attributed the many discords that mar every social and political compact, 84 to arise from the division of the heart and head; as we all know that confusion and wrong are the result of an unfinished work, or an incomplete system. He talked of woman's power and influence, and maintained that that which proved to be a discipline of mind, brought forth the powers of man, and developed a being of intelligence and judgment, would, when extended to woman, no less develope and ennoble her, as she possesses all the faculties of mind common to man, if not in equal strength. The ladies assured him that woman enjoys the opportunity of studying all the sciences, and they could not see why she did not receive all the advantages. Then he referred to the necessity of making a practical use of what we theoretically acknowledge—the need of a place and position to use the knowledge as a necessary stimulus to action. And, if the holding and using of property, the power to

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wield influence in government, promotes the happiness and sustains the independence and well-being of man, why should it not of woman? Although different results would be produced from the same faculties differently balanced in man and woman, yet it would be working to the same great end, creating a harmonious whole—the happiness of the greatest number. The ladies offered in opposition to these views the objection, “how dreadful for women to enter the battle-field” As if battles belonged to life and happiness, and the world was always going to fight! But, true to their womanly natures, the ladies adhered closely to their fixed opinions, without giving the reasons, or knowing why, protesting they did not want to vote. They had their rights, and their relations; was not that enough? I was greatly interested in the gentleman, although I had not the heart nor understanding to acquiesce in his views. However clear the proof, the theory is not yet practical.

I was happy to learn that this gentleman did not belong to that class of lean reformers, who are seeking something 85 for their hungry souls to feed upon—something to give the world a jog, whether it deserves it or not; but possessed a truly noble heart, which was mirrored in the face, and was practical in the duties of life. His very smile told his big heart. I was attracted to him by love of combat, or the generousness of his nature; as I love both exceedingly in a character. When his hearers left, I introduced myself by an incidental word, and we were soon on very social terms. What imprudence, what trampling upon Madam Conservatism, to address a gentleman unIntroduced! Why should I not have his generous smile—his good words to cheer me, when they came from a fountain that was replenished the more, the more it gave? Are there no love and friendship to exist between the sexes, between mind and mind? Are we to assume the prudishness of ninnies, the frigidness of icebergs? The world has had the result of that; and there is no elevation, no truthfulness, in the conservatism; and I shall not adhere to it, till a stronger necessity binds me than I have yet discovered.

I frankly told him my mission; he expressed a gratification that I had come out from the bondage that chains woman to a few employments, low wages, and marriage for a home.

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He gave me much encouragement, and kindly assisted me in securing rooms at the best hotel; and through his aid I have received a pass on the railroad, in which he has an interest. His disinterestedness will bear me over all the rough places until I get home.

Cape Vincent is a small place, but one with considerable moneyed aristocracy. Some of the foreign nobility dwell here, among them one French Count. I have had a fine sale for my books, as I canvassed among the gentlemen: but found but little access to the hearts or homes of the aristocratic ladies. My thanks are due to those who gave me a generous reception. Do not think I am sad when I meet with a 86 repulse; no, it is nothing more than one must expect. But when I receive a pleasant welcome, I am refreshed more by the spirit than by the act itself. I am not yet developed to value the grandeur and glory of wealth, as they are exhibited in so-called high life. I suspect my plebeian taste, to love a whitewashed cottage, is soul-born. As I have tasted the delights and comforts of living much out doors, I feel a sincere pity for those who are pent up, spending their lives in taking care of material wealth. Give me air, give me sunshine, and I will thank God for the freedom. I have need of but one more gift to finish my present enjoyment—a travelling companion. Is not that too precious a gift to ask for or expect? The life would be so pleasant, if one was not alone. I am sure we should never know sorrow. But, among all my friends, I know not one but would scorn the thought, and prefer to labor for a trifle, if only in some popular avocation. O! Pride! I almost cease to love them, because of their short-sightedness. I long so to get home, and clasp again the darling motherless ones, that love me next to their sainted mother.

### LETTER XVI.

French Creek, N. Y.

I am on the stroll again, having been at home and remained until I am really satisfied, and rested till I became weary of rest,—yes, weary of rest. To accomplish a vast deal, one must have more to do than one pleases—time must be a little crowded—then life

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goes on so earnestly. To be overworked in body or mind, life becomes too earnest, and loses its freshness, and one grows gloomy, sober, and judges harshly of their more indolent neighbors, and talks of life as wearisome. 87 But they that have power over circumstances, are bound by the law of their freedom to work and play aright.

It is the last of October, and I have been aiding my sister, off to a young ladies' boarding-school in Clinton; yet I have an aversion to boarding-schools; although I have no knowledge of them, further than an acquaintance with a few graduates, who were wonderfully praised for an easy address they had learned; and they wear a reserve as if they were to be considered a little choice; and, when they speak, one has to be on the alert to make out what the dear creatures are uttering, unless one is versed in the same fashionable dialect. Mysterious charms!

At Cape Vincent, I was introduced to a western gentleman, of some note in the political world—and also, my mission. I observed that the gentleman looked rather compassionately upon me, and on board the boat he presented himself as my adviser—to leave the business I was following, and return to woman's work. He pictured the wreck I was liable to, by so exposing myself to the thousand traps that were laid to ensnare the young and guileless; and finally, he said, I would inevitably fall into them. I treated his views with due regard, and aimed to dispel his fears, by reasoning, and the testimony of my past efforts and success. I also gave him a view of the condition of women who must depend upon themselves for all the resources to sustain life—and their limited means to do it. But he appeared blind to the facts, and urged, in opposition, the reason that has become so stale,—“that woman's clothing does not cost so much as man's;” as if one's clothing, beyond nature's wants, is of any great consequence, when one's means are circumscribed. Woman's education, board, and travelling cost the same as man's; but his democracy thought all these could be dispensed with—except when woman can lean upon man, who may choose to gratify her, and pay the expenses. He could 88 not perceive that sensible women had not all they needed—all they desired. “Man loves her.” Is that only the necessary object of her life? I asked him how many he would take care of and keep from

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suffering, for his share, from the love he bore them? “The one I have chosen, of course.” Then there existed the necessity of woman's marrying for a home; which so floods our world with sorrowing and sacrificing men and women—untuning the harmony of life, and creating domestic hostilities among the greater portion of the married class.

As I did not accede, take his advice, like a frightened school girl with starting tears, and looking each way for escape from impending danger, he turned upon me and attempted to frighten me to a promise that I would leave my employment; but I remained inflexible; then he showered a volley of sarcasm on me, which he used as if his familiar weapon. This kindled the same spirit in me, and we played in this element until the gentleman was quite angry; but from some cause unusual, I kept remarkably self-possessed. At last he arose, and assuming the appearance of superiority—as if he was not playing with his equal—looked at the gathered audience, extended his hand to me with mock reverence, and said, “Miss, you are very smart, but your life will lead you to your ruin, and this is my last advice to you—‘return now to your proper sphere.’” I thanked him, saying—“I feel no danger, as I seldom meet with men of your class.” The little man went away enraged at my retort to his intended compliment, in calling me smart, and at the laughter of the audience. Just the way one gets served when they aim to do good—to give good advice! Ungrateful world! I proved to be very quiet the remainder of the way, with my weapons sheathed, as I never use them except in self-defence.

I left the boat at the first landing, which was a large 89 place called French Creek. The morning was just dawning. Its glimmering light cast a dark and dismal shade on every object. The trees appeared deep-blue, and the sky gray, and all was gray and gloomy. I was conducted to a hotel, and, after breakfast, took up my box with the same sad heart that I often had in commencing a new place. I could not bid doubt and suspense to be gone. I called up my philosophy, but it was unavailable. After going a short distance from the hotel, I entered a house, for I knew the work must be commenced; but my martyrdom was conspicuous; and who ever cares for martyrs until they are dead, and a handsome monument marks their resting place? I passed to the second house, but to no purpose,

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and then to the third, for one cannot turn back. Here all my troubles were dispelled. The angel Joy covered me again with her bright garment, as the noble lady of a wealthy and pleasant home treated me with a mother's tenderness—gave me a welcome to her house while I remained in the place. Think you I was not a little hasty in my decision respecting the hospitality of our people? but I fear this is an exception. It is so delightful to enjoy a home life. How little from others makes a wanderer happy!

I have been here quite two weeks, yet no uncourteous remarks; and what is more intolerable, no duplicity of manner, to insinuate that they did not expect me to stay so long, but every day pleasant, smiling welcomes. I believe they have bound me longer than my business demands; at any rate I find it hard to persuade myself I have finished, and my domestic nature declares hostility towards making another move.

While I am interested in a newly married pair, I am far more so in a pair that has reached the meridian of life, who, having lived happily together, have sons and daughters born unto them, and the nestlings have grown up, and pronounce 90 in full father and mother. If there is any surety that spirits are united congenially, wholly, till the end of life, it is then promised. One cannot trust those who live peacefully and happily together at first, and think they love devotedly. It is time that makes the decision. How many loves have become hate, from the view each parent takes of the wants and necessities of their children! At this period clear judgment is required, and if one lacketh wisdom in the eyes of the other, discord and wo is the result, as each claims to be its possessor; for the wisdom of each must be used daily for their children. A house divided against itself cannot stand, and it had better not. This good pair had stood the ordeal—unity and peace were theirs; four darling pledges had blessed their love. When the father entered from his counting-room, such kind glances greeted him from wife and daughters. They made no efforts to smile as a duty, but it was the flow of affection; and he responded by a playful word. At dinner, your humble friend, seated on his left, was treated as his daughter; and each member in their accustomed places, and all so genial; the father always expecting such queer things of what we are thinking about, or plotting against him; their eldest daughter

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clearly seeing each want, and that all was in order; and some invisible hand has slipped an extra delicacy by the father's plate, which always surprises him so. Ah! domestic young ladies will bless the world most yet! Woman, living in the inner world of power and love, will woo more hearts to good, and subdue more stubborn ones than the commands of kings. If a public career will develop woman to see and feel her worth—her strength—forbid it not; but her strength must ever be in the power of her affections—I do not mean in sacrifices and submission, but spontaneous love—free and unbound by obligation, because love and forced submission are sworn enemies.

I am on a beautiful boat called the “Bay State,” and 91 we are rapidly passing down the St. Lawrence River among its Thousand Islands, some of them scarcely large enough to build a house on. The scenery is fine; and as the rain pours down in torrents, the water seems to dance and leap to the big drops that fall in it like pebbles. We have but very few passengers on board, and among them no lady has yet made her appearance; so, of course, I receive all the attention from socially-inclined gentlemen. The captain has presented himself several times to chat; but, as he proved to be almost too common, besides an inveterate chewer of tobacco, and, in my estimation of character, with no redeeming quality, I, with my usual independence, have attacked him on the use of that; and he playfully tries to defend himself, and says it is a necessary preservation for the teeth. Humph! just as if well-used nature would not take care of itself. He seems pleased to be persecuted for tobacco's sake. If an error is only fashionable, one is safe in making an attack without fear of offence or hope of reform.

*Hermon.* —I landed and spent several hours at Ogdensburgh, but it rained all the time, and the city having suffered from an extensive fire the night before; and nothing of it seemed better than a washing day in a disorderly household. From there I took a private conveyance to a small village in the woods, by the name of Canton Falls, which promises, from its water privileges, to become a place of importance. It is located on both sides of a mad, dashing river, in which there is a fall that answers for extensive manufacturing purposes. I was invited there by a gentleman to whom I was introduced when at Cape



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Vincent. I spent the Sabbath at the Falls, and enjoyed the wildness of the scene. The variegated tints of the autumn foliage, the deep-toned melody of the falling waters, and the quiet solemnity of the surrounding forest, inspired a feeling of 92 reverence and devotion within me, and I exclaimed involuntarily—how good, how great is God!

By the kindness of my friend, I was conveyed to this place. In my labors here among the people, I accidentally met with an intimate schoolmate, whom I had not seen for several years. I had quite lost sight of her in her migratory pilgrimage with her husband, a travelling minister of the M. E. Church. The fates have driven us into different paths. She a reverend's wife, and I a book agent! I expect my path is yet to have another turn, and lead me to a whitewashed cottage. But it is so pleasant to expect, when one is in good humor, that one don't care about the change.

I have been very successful thus far. If I were to tell you all that is said to me, and how I am looked upon, I should not be able to finish my letter, and I fear you would weary in reading it. I enter blacksmith shops and coopers', and all the mechanics' shops, and I am received as kindly and courteously as if my business was not an unusual one for woman. They almost universally take books, and I oftener find the true man among the laborers, than among the moneyed or professional—truer to the right—to the justice of an act.

I met with a woman here, who was compelled to acknowledge, against her will, that my work was a laudable one for a woman, and she subscribed for a book which she very much desired; but, after reflection, she decided it was wrong to patronize me, and sent me a message, asking me to have her subscription erased. Conscientious woman! Another greatly desired to patronize me, yet she did not want any books. I told her I sold to those who wanted. She reiterated she did not want any; no, not at all, but wished to encourage me! She, however, soon found one, in her indifference, that she would take at such a price, which 93 was far below what I gave for it. I told her I had but one price; but after trying to beat me down in the price, and, finding me immovable, she was so intent on having it, that she subscribed. Benevolent woman!

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I am in Canton, the county town of St. Lawrence county—a fresh thriving place, with mills, factories, and foundries. The county is a rich agricultural one. The exciting topics of the day are railroads and the election. One would decide from what they hear of the election, that this one must prove the most important crisis of the kind in the history of our country; as if the fate of the nation depended upon it. The Whigs are confident if Scott is elected, we are safe—if Pierce, all is lost. The Democrats reverse this, and look to Pierce as the saviour. I don't wonder that woman has become desirous of entering the political arena, it involves consequences of so much moment, and produces such exhilarating anxiety;—which we are always so fond of—yet so few lose sleep or appetite with fears of the result. It seems to be a pleasant play affair. The partisans make me think of when we children played “Bear,” and cried, “the Bears are coming.” How we ran and screamed! and those of us that were endowed with the most wonder, would quite cry with the belief that the bears were coming. Delicious fright! Who don't enjoy it?

They talk of railroads with a livelier interest,—as if they are quite in earnest; and one might readily suppose that every man was a railroad agent, and every village was to have a railroad, and become a city—and each man flatters himself that he will become rich. If they were not men, I would suppose them a little too sanguine!

I am boarding in a private family, as I always desire to do. Calling here on my business, I met the daughter who was the wife of a clergyman who visits at my home, besides both families were of the same faith; but, what drew me 94 still nearer to them, I found they were somewhat reformed in diet; I welcomed a change, as I am fed on knick-knacks as much as a school ma'm. The permission to board during my sojourn here was granted at the rate of two dollars per week. They are very wealthy, and have a large farm near the town, on which they have always resided till within a few years. They are now here, and live in much style. The first introduction I shall give you to my hostess, is to say, her whole being is absorbed in pure selfishness, and her entire appearance is marked by this ruling propensity. Her sharp gray eyes are continually on the lookout that nothing is wasted;

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she walks with a carefulness, as if her shoes must last a stated time; her table is scantily furnished, which makes one feel so hungry. I shall be glad when I leave, for I know there is danger of becoming sick from over-eating. I reason with myself—but then it is so charming to see nothing left on the table; not because one wants “to kiss the cook;” one can't tell why, it is only an ugly nature that comes over one, when stinted. Her husband seems once to have possessed more generosity, but she has baptized him into her spirit until they are well matched. At first I was much amused, but it has become oppressive and annoying; and I do not feel that I can breathe freely. A selfish soul is truly a paradise lost.

*Sunday Evening.* When I awoke this morning, the earth was covered with snow; besides, we have had a long, drizzling rain. I feel a little disheartened, when I know I have to travel all this ground over again to distribute my books. I went to church this morning with the family; the whole services were dull; the singing was loud, and not a word audibly pronounced; the prayer was long and wordy, and ran into a labyrinth of expression, which I wonder if the congregation understood, or God either; or if it had any meaning. At the commencement of the sermon, the air 95 was warm and suffocating, and I lost all sense of appreciating the good man's discourse. I observed his elderly hearers nodding, and the younger portion were trying to keep themselves awake and entertained by observing the latest fashions of bonnets and cloaks, at the expense of the sermon, and a loss of good, no doubt, for want of air. What a misfortune that people do not understand the necessity of having pure air! Our private and public rooms generally are too destitute of the means of sufficient ventilation; the atmosphere is excluded as an intruder. The homes present the worst abuse of the laws of respiration. Large fires, and the darling little babies placed by them, closely covered when asleep—fairly toasted; and the older ones that run about are not allowed to go to the open door; and the mother complains of what dreadful colds her family have, and how it is she cannot understand. She has been so careful! I have heard what are called educated women talk thus. Oh! mothers! what do they think about? Where is their taste, and where their knowledge? Have they not learned that the first act of life is to breathe; and the air too should be pure? Active, vigorous minds cannot spring

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up in impure air, or unclean bodies; the effect is no less perceptible on the mind than the presence of a film on the eye affects the vision. "It is as easy for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle," as to develop a whole and finished character, in bad air and filth. I am painfully and daily reminded of the great remissness of my countrywomen in obeying physiological laws. This disregard is not confined to the humbler classes, but extends to the opulent and more intelligent—to those who keep their parlors nice and clean, and dress elegantly. They reason as logically about ventilation and health as a lady did, that tried to persuade me to eat green corn. "Green corn never hurts any body, if they eat it hot and plenty of butter on it." I fancy my hostess does not reason thus; she would want to know the philosophy of eating so much butter.

To-day I met with one of the leading, wealthy ladies of the town. She liked the idea of women having more employments, but she was afraid I was "a woman rights," as she could not see how I could do thus, unless I was; if so, she would not patronize me any how; for women ought to be governed—it was their natures to be ruled, and men's to govern. Holy writ commanded it,—enough,—I submitted. But her manner of treating the subject excited a playful resistance, and I did not see fit to inform her of my opinions, but, receding a few paces, and scrutinizing more particularly the august personage, I feared to attack her in full size; so I reversed my telescope, and beheld her, so diminutive, that I felt the conquest would be easy. So I made another effort; still she declared she would not take any, if I belonged to that class, although her daughter wanted one. As every one has their weak point, and woman's usually lies in her vanity, I told her I had heard that she was one of the first and most influential ladies of the place; when her name was added to my list, without further inquiry as to my woman's rights views.

I went to a public-house, where the mistress desired my cooking book. She sat for a few moments, and gazed at me with a fiendlike eye—which made me shrink with fear—and then asked me a variety of questions, in a tone that was akin to thunder, which I answered as audibly as I could, for it seemed to me my voice had fainted. She next inquired where I boarded. I told her. She threw down the book, and, in a tone that startled me, exclaimed,

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—“Well, if you had come here to board, I would have taken one of your books.” On leaving her presence, I found myself almost paralyzed; and I hear the hag's voice now. I pray I may never meet with another such creature in the form of woman; and, I thank God, that there are but few—and I hope only 97 one! When I returned to my boarding-house, I indulged in some criticisms on the two prominent characters I met, but my hostess quickly hushed me, saying, “we all have our faults.” Charitable woman! She was as sparing of her censure, as of her bread and butter.

I find that a young lady, some two years since, canvassed this town for the “Pictorial History of North America.” She carried a prospectus, in soliciting subscriptions, and afterwards delivered the work, which was decidedly inferior to what was promised; besides, she sold many at half the price she charged her regular subscribers. I think she did not deserve the name of lady—though, I am told, she had a very fine appearance and address, a pretty face, wore curls and laughed most musically. Ah! the naughty witch! It made the men so angry, to be cheated by a woman, in money matters; it is twice as bad as for a man to have done it! They told me they had declared that they would never patronize another; but I endeavored to show them the injustice of condemning the whole craft, from the dishonesty of one; and, with my honest face and plain speech, I succeeded in obtaining the subscriptions of all but one, and he warmly protests that he never will be cheated in any way again, by a woman. The little man talks crazy—he don't know what he says! I hope that dishonest woman has been led to see the two great wrongs she has committed; first, by lessening the confidence of mankind in the goodness of her sex, and next, in destroying the business for her successors; to say nothing of the still greater wrong done to herself. Book peddling is a work in which misunderstandings will occur, and subscribers will often make them, for the purpose of getting released from taking their books.

I met with a gentleman book agent here, a college student, who was “travelling for his health, and took a book agency for diversion”—a very acceptable diversion when one is not 6 98 obliged to resort to it; yes, and saves all the disgrace of the labor—even proud of

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it. He wore a generous gold watch-guard, which marks him from the common folk; as to the watch, I doubt his having any, as I heard him wondering what time it was one evening. Besides, he carries a quizzing glass, which I don't believe serves him half as good a purpose as my telescope does me. He greets me very kindly, but I think I see behind that, when he tells me I monopolize the whole ground—a wish that I were gone; and to-morrow I shall be. Good!

My sympathies and happiness are greatly affected by those I am with. To be in the presence of any being who seems self-satisfied with an error—and even claim it to be a virtue; or, who may be so hardened as not to know they possess one,—and I, too, must seem not to know it. O! it chokes me—I scarcely breathe! Give me those who let out all their faults, and mine too, if need be.

O! how the autumn winds howl and whistle around my room. I have always loved them, and bid them welcome when in a nice little room like this, with a fire burning so bright,—it makes one thank God so heartily, for comforts. But to-night I feel like a criminal. I had rather live on the simplest fare, and in a shanty, where love is, than in a palace with its luxuries, where dwell wrong and selfishness.

I am in Malone, the largest town in Franklin county. It is a large and beautiful place, built on a cluster of hills. I am nicely quartered with a clerical friend and his good wife, who seem just fitted for their high mission. They have three beautiful children. It gladdens one's heart to be with such bright darlings. Children, to me, are the loveliest flowers of the earth. What a pity that so many are spoiled by what is called government! They are always being told “they must behave—must be good.” I wonder if the darlings know what it means; I never did, and neither do I now. 99 If they had rules to obey daily, and those rules defined by these expressions, they might understand them. But they only come and go, with company, or when the mother is going out, and she says in such earnestness —“Children, you must be good—you must behave!” which puts the little brood in a tremor, as if something bad would happen, until they get hardened. Then why does one speak

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when it does no good? If their little bodies were taken care of properly, never a hard word spoken to injure their self-respect, and as tenderly regarded as company, with a good example before them—this would be the true government, and the result would be noble men and women! So much for your special benefit on the bringing up of children, the theory of which perplexes all good mothers; but not at all your inexperienced friend. It has been said by a wise man, that it requires better judgment to educate children than to be a president.

The father is a fine little man, but not at all fitted for his profession, as ministers are expected to see and handle all points and views very carefully and soberly, and some things a little blindly, especially the faults of their congregation, and their own necessities; and he has no faculty for either of the last requirements. Besides, he has such an inveterate love for fun-making, whenever the whole family have enough for their supper and bait for their breakfast. Enough to eat never produces sadness, and a full stomach often opens a channel to the soul; but not enough to eat, often drives a whole community into a quarrel, and with starvation one often doubts their own immortality.

I must leave here to-morrow, for I have sent a letter to “our folks,” asking them to meet me at the Manor depot, in the Saturday evening train. I am going after the books to supply my subscribers, and to see the publishers, whom I so much admire.

I went to several small places after leaving Canton. I was 100 crowned with success every where, and greeted by friendly people. One lady took a great fancy to me, and thought I was so handsome and smart; and one gentleman thought there was something about me remarkable, and predicted for me a great fate. I see it does not take much knowledge or wit for the world to call a woman smart. Some thought I would make a good wife, as I could help to earn the living; and a clever old Irishman said, “Fath, I wesh you were me wife, you wad get me brade.” Another thought I would lose all my domestic qualities in travelling about thus, and make a bad wife. One said my eyes looked like a poetess, while another, that he knew I was somebody else. Some praised me for being a book agent, and

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others condemned me. I heard as great a variety of opinions respecting me, as in the fable of the old man and his son in getting to market with the ass. The conductor of the train in my trip up here had heard of me, and gave me my fare, pronouncing me a moral heroine, and chatting at every opportunity. I do not see but that it is as much to be a book agent lion as any other, since they get as many good qualities imputed to them as those do who fill more pretending positions.

Here I was received so cordially by the ladies; I only wondered if I should ever be half so good. One wealthy matron, not knowing I had friends here, invited me to take up my abode at her house; another wished me to spend a day with her, she thought she could gain so much knowledge from my conversation. I went back to my friends, wondering in what my wisdom lay, that it had not been discovered before; and the next day I was turned out of doors from a fine-looking house. Thus the diversity of human life!

A Mrs. Strong, M. D., is lecturing here on physiology. The propriety of women speaking in public is considerably discussed here; but I had supposed that Holy Writ conclusively decided that long ago, when it was pronounced "a 101 shame for a woman to speak in public." By some the M. D. and the book agent are taken for the same person. They must conclude she is very industrious, to lecture evenings after canvassing all day. I called at one place where the family were at dinner, and noticed the gentleman viewed me rather unfavorably. By some remark, I undeceived him of the mistake he was laboring under, of my being the lecturer. A change was apparent, and he gave me a warm invitation to dine with them. I accepted it, as book agents are always hungry when they have been right eloquent and successful. I found him to be a lawyer—a keen, jolly little man, and agreeable, if one only humored his prejudices. I was surprised that, with his knowledge, he had not renounced some of them, at least, so that one's pursuits would not affect his civilities. The peculiarities of some have to be humored to keep peace with them. Every one must take views with them, or they are blind.



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At the close of my canvassing here, I called at a fine looking dwelling. A servant admitted me. Having inquired for the lady of the house, one made her appearance, and I commenced telling her my business, when she started, as if some new discovery had flashed across her mind, and glided into another room. Scarcely a moment had passed, when a little fat gentleman came waddling in, and looking like a bristling cat, cried in an Irish brogue, "You plase to walk right out doors." For an instant I sat motionless, and thought, "What have I done?" and then, with as much composure as I could command, I inquired what it meant. "And in fath it's no matter, there's the door." I felt there was no danger of being cast out, so I laughingly said, I am not going to leave you in such a passion. But if I have offended you in any manner, I wish to make apologies, and shall be pleased to know the cause of my offence. "I wish you to walk out doors; you are the lady that lectures, and 102 said the Catholic priests would not allow their people to read the Bible, and I am a Catholic priest." I told him earnestly he was mistaken, for I was not the lady. At this, he summoned my accuser, who came forward sputtering, "I think it a shame for a woman to get up in public, and talk about how we are made, or talk of it at all; it is no modesty in a a woman to know any thing about it, and it is none of her business." Here the priest nodded, and she was gone, without making any charges against me as being the lady she heard lecture. I then told him my business; but he did not think it a very proper one for woman, and asked why did I not teach. I drew, a picture of the sufferings of woman, subjected, as she is, to a few employments, and they, necessarily crowded, must yield meagre compensation. If she has a sick father that depends on her for support—a dear brother that wanted an education, and a young and helpless sister, what can her life be but one of struggle and heart-suffering? I almost wept from sympathy at the picture I drew, the good-hearted priest did quite,—he thought such a fate mine, and searching his pockets with the greatest fury, ran into another room, called one of his women, and back again, saying there was not a dollar in the house. I told him I never took money as a gift, but I would sell him some of my books. But not one of my books would he have in his

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house. If I would teach, he would get me a school. I told him I did not like teaching—that it was drudgery to me, and I believed it a wrong to sacrifice one's self.

All at once the little man swelled up again; declared I was travelling with the lecturer—he knew I was, and flew to the door, opened it, and bade me go out. I told him I was not, and I never saw the lady until I came here, and he must believe me. If I was not, I was something quite as bad—a book agent, and it was a shame for a woman to be either, and I must leave the house. Like the fabled wolf to the 103 lamb, quarrel about something he would. As he held open the door for me to depart, giving him one of my sweetest smiles and bidding him good day, I left. I was not out of the yard, when following after, he begged my “pardon a thousand times;” declaring that he never spoke a rude word to a lady before in his life; but he was so “mad at the lecturing woman for spaking against the Catholic praest.” I granted the pardon, and complimented him for his penitence, and he was gone.

I never met with a being of such sudden changes of passion, and so strong; it was like the play of thunder and lightning. I suppose you think by this time, that I have become a pert, saucy little Miss, from so many skirmishes. The lion lies down in his lair, and the cat draws in her claws and sleeps—how peacefully! So, good-night.

I am home again with welcome smiles and glad greetings. I, went from Malone to a large village in St. Lawrence County, called Potsdam; I did not want to go, and the fates were against it, for it rained nearly the whole of two days I was there; but I reasoned it was best. While here, I called on a lady—one of the “upper ten,” who was quite accomplished, and played the piano finely. Her husband was a lawyer—had been an Assembly-man, and flourished quite largely in his patriotism; his wife enjoyed the honors attending the family from his loyalty to his country, and prided herself on her family connections, whom she considered quite distinguished. In looking over my books, she held in her hand the *Memoirs of Mary and Martha Washington*. Looking at the likeness of Martha in the frontispiece, and admiring the sweet face, she exclaimed, “What a perfect likeness of her father, George Washington?” Ho! Tuttut, could one woman know every thing? Such a little

mistake is of no importance; I did not correct it, but since have wished that I had—for I have learned that she did not like 104 me. How forbearance and sweet charity vanish, when I is touched.

**LETTER XVII.**

Ellisburgh, N. Y.

Dear Jane: Almost two months have passed since I have written you of my wanderings. In your last, you seemed to be a little fearful that I had floated beyond the reach of your letters. Was that the reason of so short an epistle? I have accomplished much since my last to you, and am just ready to migrate southward. I went to the publishers for my books, but it rained the whole week—the earth received its autumn christening. Travelling is endurable in pleasant weather, and autumn rains are charming when at home. The Indian summer came—the crowning glory of this season—although I left home for my distributing tour in a rain and snow storm, and a cloud hung over both body and mind. Every one said it was so imprudent in me, and that such rains always ended in winter and heavy snows. The scene looked dark, but I had subscriptions for nearly three hundred dollars worth of books, which must be disposed of; besides, I was bound by honor to my patrons; also, my time and money had been spent, which was of importance.

At Cape Vincent, I was obliged to stay three days, from a new arrangement of the boats; the express line being laid up for the winter. It rained all the time, so I submitted patiently to the delay, and enjoyed myself with agreeable people, with whom I had met before at the hotel. Among them was one intelligent young man—O, how I wish young men would not take what intoxicates, and thus degrade their manhood!—and the lady of the house, I pray God to bless her—she is so nobly kind to her guests.

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One whole-souled woman—I like the term woman, for it takes in all—will bless a numerous household; her presence is sun-light to the traveller; a pleasant word for all, and so

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spontaneous, which is responded to with a special regard and pleasure. Who ever knew a public house to be scarcely endurable, or to prosper, when the lady is seldom seen, and then only as a boarder, and like a dressed statue.

Several persons of some attraction came there during my stay. One young gentleman, a Southerner who, report says, is going to Canada for a wife, had a slave with him, dressed in more style than the master, and it was insinuated by many that it was for the purpose of giving a flattering idea of slavery to the North. The master seemed but little inclined, from his appearance, to care to impress either way; he was remarkably gentlemanly and unpretending. He gave some representations of Southern life—and I wish more than ever to visit the South. He did not think that slavery was without its wrongs to both master and slave; had visited the North many times, and always brought with him a slave, to which he offered freedom; but none had accepted it. I believed what he said, because I trust much from the face and tone for the worth of what I ever hear. I place no more reliance on what some of our abolitionists say of the South, than on other enthusiasts, where I have an opportunity of knowing the truth of their assertions, which are often false, either from wrong seeing, wrong feeling, or from a petty ambition to keep out of the common.

The rain ceased, and the dove went forth—the glorious Indian summer succeeded—not winter and snow—and all was good. I spent two weeks with my friends in Malone, but the minister had gone a hunting on the wilds of “John Brown's tract,” which is famous for deer, and a resort for hunters of game and pleasure from our large cities. I spent the time with the wife and children—sometimes we read to 106 each other, and I occasionally aided in the household labor, played with, and taught the children little songs, and kissing and almost adoring the baby, which exceeds in beauty all the baby kind; besides eating and sleeping abundantly.

I visited with the shepherdess, some of the shepherdless flock—went to a thanksgiving dinner in the country, where we were actually stuffed by attempting to taste of the variety set before us. I wonder if the people will ever leave off the barbarous custom of loading

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their tables with such an everlasting multitude of dishes—dishes that would give any animal the dyspepsia. What a picture! Nearly every living animal and growing substance is submitted, in some form, to the digestion of the human species—and that too, without any system. Any thing that can be masticated, whether it be, or not, is devised and thrust into the stomach, usually hot. The effect is not looked after; and if sickness follow, Providence and the physician are both talked of,—one as sending,—the other, as curing it. What miracles! But as I am over the effect of the thanksgiving dinner, as much as I ever shall be, and of many others of hot bread, meats, and greasy pastry, that have been forced upon me, if I ate at all, I will pronounce a benediction.

I waited patiently till Saturday night, to see what the minister would bring back to feed his flock. We expected manna in the form of deer, as the minister was famed as a marksman, but, like all other hunters for once, he had been unsuccessful, and the whole blame was laid on the innocent animals for escaping,—and, on the Sabbath morning, he gave nothing but crumbs to his starving flock; he had nothing else to give; but he had the magic of lessening their hunger, by not opening and exhibiting the fountain of abundance. If some came hungering for richer food, they soon fell asleep with others on crumb-feeding, forgetting their needs. As he stood before them, he seemed just to have remembered 107 the sacred injunction, “Good shepherd, feed your sheep;” but there he was, in their presence, with only a few fragments, and without faith in their power to bless and fill all. Poor shepherd! starving sheep! With all God's rich pastures, thousands are bleating and hungry! So much for a minister who went a hunting and caught no game.

I came home by the stage route, which is soon to be superseded in quickness and comfort by a railroad. I pray the fates will not demand of me the horrible penance of another stage ride in cold weather, and it is still less acceptable in hot. Crawl into a little hole, at best not large enough for one to breathe freely alone—when crowded, not a breath of air—and some one can't bear air. Get up in the night half asleep, get in, and off they go, shaking and jostling—one grows sick and cold—they wish—no, they can't wish any thing bright—

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but sit still and feel bad—for to stir is worse, if the horses run away—the stage tips over. Who cares? One may tumble out. Good!

I stopped within sixty miles from home to see a poetess of some merit and fame. She promises, with age and time to, make quite a writer. I had never seen an author; therefore desired to see if they were like other human beings, and yet write such strange, sweet things. I found this one very susceptible to impressions, and with much strength of feeling, but lacking in judgment, and in rational ideas of life—deficient in clear reasoning—living in an over sensitiveness of feeling. Like all country or secluded writers, who have not been jostled and cuffed by mingling in the world, which gives every one what they deserve—especially in cuffings—she is in danger of being spoiled from praise and flattery of friends; for who ever thought of saying other than complimentary things when authors read their own productions? One has not the heart to say otherwise.

Before I was ready to leave, the weather grew delightful 108 again; the snow had melted away from the hills, and the smoky atmosphere promised the complement of the Indian summer. So I canvassed all the little villages that thickly spotted the route, and promised to deliver the books within a month. In January, I took one of my father's colts, and carriage—went and distributed them. My father begins to estimate me as quite a character,—and so do I,—for depending on my own powers. Oh! the charm of self-reliance! Yet I feel very humble and prayerful when alone.

The winter had been very mild, but I provided myself with every comfort for cold weather. The morning I started was beautiful; and my sleek, fat horse glided like a sprite over the plank road, and required some strength to curb his full nature, and insure a safe journey. Finding it so pleasant, I decided I should like to ride over all the earth, if I could do the driving. On the second day the atmosphere grew warm, the sky was clouded over, and the snow fell in large flakes. I had distributed only in two villages, and it was thirty miles yet to the last one; I looked towards the heavens with a concerned face, and prayed it to stop snowing; but it came on, soft and heavy. I kept on, hoping, fearing, and praying;

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my little horse had lost the fire of his speed, and his head drooped as he dragged along the clogged wheels. I wished he could feel my pity for him expressed in kind words; but he experienced its effects in oats and good care, for I always enlisted the interests of the ostler in his behalf. He went wearily on; to stop and wait till the snow was over and gone, I could not; to return—no; and on we went, the snow measuring three feet deep by the experienced farmer's eye. I waded through its depths from house to house in the villages, delivering my books; the present suffering of my mind and body was nothing—not so much as the expectancy.

As my last book was delivered, I turned towards home 109 nearly exhausted with fatigue, and despairing at the thoughts of plodding sixty miles thus, and cried from my whole heart, "I am a martyr!" I felt neglected—I felt I was not duly appreciated, and that I ought to wear a crown of glory in this world, for I had no doubt of wearing one in the purer spheres. I felt a contempt for the world's ingratitude. I had a full realization of its indifference, and declared in the bitterness of my soul, I would withdraw my aid, and live for myself alone. At home no one praised me, none called me a heroine—all said it was imprudent, ridiculous, and I began to doubt my deserving more than I received, and whether martyrs for money and self-interest ever received a crown—only a crown of thorns. I became fully convinced that all receive their dues; that we are not so badly appreciated; that we are, in the main, seen in the true light, and that, if we desire to reap a good harvest, we must plant good seed. The earth is a broad field, and thereon are materials for all the wants of man; he has but to step in, cull from the abundance, work, and the reward is precisely the result of his labors. No one gets wronged of their just dues, if they will have them, and work right earnestly. This great law of rewarding every man according to his work, is God's law, and therefore immutable.

### LETTER XVIII.

New-York City.

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To tell you of my journey to this great city is, that I left home in the morning, and at sunset was here, a distance of three hundred and fifty miles. The home scenes, and parting with loved ones—the associations of the past, the hopes and the expectations of the future, with its many doubts and fears, occupied my thoughts. I only remember 110 at Utica some little newsboys, and some that cried apples and popped corn to sell, in such musical tones and so in- nocently childlike. I thought the music sweeter than the blackbird's singing, of which it reminded me, and I wished they could always sing out so cheerily. They clustered around the outside of the car windows, and a few quietly trespassed within the car, and had the whole ground to themselves, until some higher authority sent them out. I remember, too, that my fare on the Harlem railroad was only one dollar, for a ride of a hundred and fifty miles, and that I felt a little mistrustful of a safe conveyance, at so cheap a rate, as it usually proves that cheap things are cheap, and to have the good we must pay its worth; but we were carried through safely—a benevolent company; for I was told that the road scarcely paid its way! From Albany here I saw some glorious hills. They were capped with the white mists, and, here and there, spots of snow; and bounding rivulets, from the thaw, ran down their steep sides most joyously.

Here, by the aid of a friend, I have a private boarding-house, and all promises bright. I believe I was sent by some guardian angel, for I have found a lovely orphan girl, of highly cultivated mind, who desires and promises to be my travelling companion and partner in the book business. She is engaged as a governess in a Jersey family, but is now spending a few days of vacation with her brother here. We trust a more harmonious firm cannot exist, in all its relations. Yes, again and again we have pronounced the names of Mendell and Hosmer, and fancy they mingle musically. We conclude we are well mated; for, according to the old adage, two alike can never agree; and we are decidedly unlike in appearance, though we appreciate the general characteristics of each. We enjoy the ludicrous, and nothing gives every-day life more zest, and binds two spirits more pleasantly 111 and understandingly together, than a recognition of the ridiculous and



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funny; especially two beings afloat, whose troubles are as independent as themselves. Our sympathies and experience on the subject of teaching are alike; it is repulsive to both.

I have prayed in my inmost heart, that come what may, may I never again be obliged to yield to the degradation of soul, in doing what is repulsive to my feelings. Conformists may cant of its good—the beauty of humbling and crucifying the body and mind to duty; but a good, fresh, and noble character never existed, that was developed under the rod of duty. To labor daily in any work that one dreads, and almost loathes, narrows, gnaws, deadens, and kills the soul, and the victim looks like a condemned criminal. If each individual would put away conformity in every degree and appearance, speak out the true thought and feeling, our world would be more heavenly, and our lives more angelic; but as it is, the masses are corrupted by its despotism, and the whole life is false. Why I so much admire my young companion, is her nonconformity, and her common sense views of life. What ideas exist respecting the cause of harmony and happiness!

My companion and myself are laughing and chatting as though we were old friends; when nothing calls us out we are silent. How agreeable is company that sometimes lets you alone, and is not always trying to entertain you, as if it were a duty. We have been to see several of the first publishers about books, and have returned very well satisfied, and pronounce the world good; and if to-morrow we should not, why I hear the cry of fickle—changeable. Fy! there are no two pictures alike; and the variety is what gives more than one thought, one sympathy. To-morrow my companion leaves for her governess home, to prepare, and to meet me on the cars the following day. The dread of my new tour is 112 gone, all other accompanying troubles are for the glory of the cause, to whet the will and keep it bright and sharp.

To say any thing of this big city—it seems to me a floating mass of human beings, great and small, good and bad, rich and poor, bond and free, beauty and deformity. When one is first set down in it, it seems like a human wilderness, and to move from the place, you fear you will get lost, and be devoured by its wild animals. The whole world appears to be

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let loose on Broadway, with its myriad throngs; in some parts of it omnibuses, carriages, carts and drays are wedged together so densely, that when one moves they all move, and when one stops all stop. Vice and virtue, wealth and poverty, pass on unmindful of each other, and 'tis well that it is so—that the heart is not kept always open to the apparent suffering of those around us, for often the subjects are less sufferers than the beholders. Few will endure filth and poverty, that do not in a measure feel them their elements. The real sufferer will have release, they cannot bind him. Circumstances may hold some in the jaws of poverty for a while, but the bearing of such has a loftiness that tells the man—such spirits can suffer, O! how keenly, but they must rise; every desire, every struggle and every heart-ache lifts them up higher. Worth will meet with its reward; how I thank God for so perfect a law!

The most charming sights I have seen here are the beautifully dressed ladies that promenade Broadway; and the shipping, the masts of which look like a leafless forest. I have attended the theatre, had to breathe impure air, and witness poor playing, though some of the actors were the lions of the day. I am surprised that the tastes of the people are not advanced further than to be amused by such stale performances. I supposed that one wept at scenes representing sorrow, or felt as if they should; but such scenes were applauded by laughter. What a farce!

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*Philadelphia.* —My companion did not meet me, but she has the address of my friends here, and I shall expect her any time. Dear Jane, I have seen a wolf! yes, a wolf—I'm sure he was—on the cars! What! a wolf on the cars, and in the passenger train? Yes; but he had on sheep's clothing, and he sat very near me and others! A wolf among lambs? Yes. He tried to act as if he was not in his borrowed garb. It makes me shudder now with very fear, when I think how he turned his big eyes on me! I looked away, and hardly dared breathe. By-and-by, he took a seat nearer me. I kept looking out the window; then he offered me a newspaper. What! wolves read newspapers? Yes, dear Jane, this kind of wolves. I looked very cross, and told him I never read when I was travelling; but he did

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not care, and took a seat just before me. O! dear! I thought I should scream with fright—I could scarcely sit still; and he said he had met me before. I knew I never had met a wolf before;—how could I have forgotten it? I never shall this time. I did not say a word, but looked very intent upon the passing country. He said that he had met me when I was travelling, and that I talked with him. I could not remember meeting him. I am sure I never did. He said I was a book agent; what business was it to him if I was? and, he pitied me very much. I would speak, then, if he was a wolf. I did not need any pity, and told him so, but he talked on; he told me he had two lambs, one of them was his companion,—I pitied the poor shorn thing that I knew she must be,—and that he had a young and tender little lamb—he was its father—and his eyes grew so beautiful as he talked of it. What! a father be a wolf? No, no; it could not be. I was sorry I thought him a wolf—how cruel! He did not look so like a wolf either,—no. I would talk, and make it up. How wrong to distrust! 114 He told me that he lived in Washington. Humph! I have heard of wolves there, but he was not one.

I told him I was going to Washington. He said he could aid me there, and he advised me what was best to do;—for which I was thankful, and told him so. He said a warm heart like mine must be sad at times. I wished he had not said thus; but he looked so innocent, as if it was nothing to say. I told him if my friend did not meet me, I might be lonely sometimes. He said he would be my friend, and wanted me to trust him entirely;—that he knew how I would want some one to trust, in a city like Washington,—and talked much about his benevolence, and my having entire confidence in him. I told him my nature was very stubborn, and I could not trust, until I could not help it. But he said the same thing again, and more too—many things I thought very wrong, about admiring me; but he always looked so innocent, as if it was nothing bad. How dare I be angry, and too, when he had talked so well, and I had thought he was not a wolf; but I wished he was away, be whatever he might. O! dear! He said I had beautiful eyes—so beautiful! O! just as the wolf talked to “little Red Riding-Hood.” I looked as angry as I could, and my face grew red. He did not look at me, but kept on talking, and said I had a pretty little hand. What

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a falsehood! I knew then he was a wolf. O! how I trembled; I felt so grieved that a father should be a wolf. How dreadful! I shall never speak again to one that looks like a wolf at first No, no!—the ravenous wolf!

Dear Jane; I was never so sad. I have just received a letter from the young lady, and she writes she cannot go with me—that her employers will not release her until the expiration of the engagement. What strange and cruel people, to demand her stay when she cannot be happy! How much good will she do them, when she desires to be gone? No philosophy!—lose their money,—although it is a very little. Or has she changed her mind, and made this for an excuse, as many of my sex would do? O! I hope not—I trusted her so firmly, and loved her, because she is proud, and has character, and feels herself a reliable being. O! it sickens me to the soul to lose confidence; but now, I never trust words, unless they are responded to in the voice and face; for, one cannot feel and act falsely but a few times before it grows on the face. None of the graces are so beautiful as frankness and truthfulness, and none lose so quickly the sweet tint, when wronged. Woman, that they adorn most—if a good can adorn one more than another—how she neglects these virtues—makes no account of daily disregarding them—and why is it so? Is it because woman's life is spent in petty things? If so, let her take a more responsible position; or, are not her duties now vastly responsible, and would they not elevate her character if she would throw off this foul conservatism, which makes her live so falsely, and take in its stead common sense?

I shall wait with trust until the time of my friend's release. When I think of her sweet, truthful face, I know that I can trust—that she has not changed her mind—and yet say that she will come. No, the face is a perfect mirror of the character.

### LETTER XIX.

Washington.

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The first impression that one receives of Washington is, that there is plenty of breathing room; and, as I am particularly tenacious of an abundance of space and air, I'll cry good! I conclude sometimes that I am inclined to suffocation, and that I need more air than others—for most people 116 remain in close, confined rooms, without any apparent manifestations of uneasiness. But never mind, in Washington there is sufficient air to sustain physical life; so I'll thank the Lord and go on and tell you more of the city. The streets are remarkably broad, and I suppose the governmental buildings are grand: but like all that is large and magnificent, one can't take the whole splendor at once, or perhaps my taste is uneducated, that I do not more fully appreciate it. The situation of the capitol is decidedly good, and the capitol itself is rather fine, but the view of the surrounding scenery is unsurpassingly beautiful.

Washington is like a household preparing a great feast—bustle and confusion. This week the ceremony of inaugurating the new President takes place with the usual pomp. People are here from various parts, and the city is literally stuffed with the human kind. It is said that throngs of men can get nothing better than the floor to sleep on. One hears on all sides “there was never so many people in Washington before; this will be the greatest inauguration ever known.” Yes, yes, the present event is always the greatest. The only boarding place that I could procure was a hotel, at two dollars per day, and as my scanty purse could not endure that long, I have hired a furnished room, and have my food brought to me. I prefer it to boarding. My room is cosy, and a bright fire burns upon the hearth, and for my food I can have whatever I order. I believe this manner of living will supersede the present style of boarding. It is more independent and secluded, and one can select for their own appetite. I only wish that my companion was with me.

I have a neighbor in the next room—a young lady from the State of New Jersey. She is a stalwart Miss, both in mind and body; but having, apparently, the rough edges unhewn. She came here for the purpose of seeing the grand and wonderful, and, finally, every thing that is to be seen, 117 and in its brightest light. She says she writes every thing

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down, and I guess she does, in a large book that she carries under her arm. She says she is very fond of writing—likes nothing better than to write—writes descriptions of every thing she sees—writes poetry, is very fond of writing it—has written for the papers, and means to write a book. Brave girl! I don't believe she knows what she utters, when she talks so calmly about writing a book—as if it was nothing! She talks to me of poets and historians; she tells me of such and such an one, asking if I have read them, or speaking as if I had, of course, but I have to say no. I feel deeply the lack of book knowledge, though I endeavor to appreciate, and keep on the alert, so that when she speaks of an author that I have ever heard of, I help comment too. But you know when one has a limited knowledge, they soon show their limits, if they try to be ever so sensible, and after that they are nothing. My neighbor proves the truth of this, as of late she says nothing about books. The only curiosity that I have is to know what she sees through her telescope. But I know if she writes a piece for the paper about the President, it will be patriotic and honor the country. She talks of school teaching, as one would of reeling yarn,—days, months, and years, she kept as if they passed unconsciously—skipped through the whole like a dream. I told her I did not like it, that it made me nervous; at which she opened her eyes wide, and, with a look of surprise and a half laugh, said I was a queer being.

*Wednesday.* —To-day I followed my neighbor's example, and went out. I took my books and went to the Treasurer's department. I see this is no time for my labor here; there is no quiet, and the clerks are looking sad and sober. The Whigs know there is little hope for them, and no hope but for a few; and the question arises, Is it I that must depart? The now favored Democrats who have been here years are 118 asking if it is even so, if they are Democrats. Pets of fickle fortune! Those who expect to remain have subscribed liberally.

I have taken several letters of introduction from Philadelphia friends to M. C.'s, who, in return, have given me introductory letters to the South—a safe reliance! If I should be taken for a Northern fugitive, I am safe now, and in all perils, as I have the talisman of an Honorable's signature. I have been spending a part of the day in the House of Representatives; it is a large rotunda, badly lighted and miserably ventilated, with a gallery

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extending half round it, for the accommodation of visitors. Below are seats and desks for the members. Fronting the audience is a pulpit, in which a member stood, as I entered, reading at the top of his voice; but, owing to the noise, one in the gallery could only hear occasionally a word. Two sat near him writing with all speed; and of the others, some few were listening, many talking, others writing, and some asleep. Troops of little boys were flying about as carriers, and looked as honest and earnest as if they were the main men of the house. Their industry was charming, it gave such a tone of importance to their appearance, besides, one loves industry for industry's sake. Being weary of trying to hear, I observed the appearance and physiognomy of the members. I noticed several who seemed decidedly at their ease—at home. I pointed them out to my attendant, and learned that they were Southerners, who had been Representatives for years. Ah! the secret of the southern power! By sending the same men so long, they are enabled to carry out their measures.

All at once there arose such a cry from the members, "Speaker! speaker! speaker!" I thought the speaker must be dreadfully abashed. But he silently looked down on his paper. As soon as they were quiet, he went on reading. But again came the cry, "Speaker! speaker!" Why 119 did he not answer them? But he went on reading. Presently another furious call, "Speaker!" but no answer. I began to think he had a stubborn nature, and looked a little sulky; and as he read again, "Speaker! speaker!" was reiterated. Why did he not answer them? He behaved so like a mule! After an interval of silence, he read on, and a louder cry came, "Speaker!" and some of the members really bristled up, and advanced toward him. But he stood still, and said never a word. I guess he needed a sweet, soft voice to say, "Mr. Speaker," and then he would answer. I was half in the act of putting my head over the banister, and saying in my prettiest, "Speaker!" when the thought came that woman had no voice there. I'm glad she has not, for her very presence makes the members look up into the gallery, and try to say smart things, and thus get the handsomest to look at them. But they are men and Honorables; it is no vanity in them. When the speaker grew less stubborn, he sat down, but without answering. Then another

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member arose, who, from his manner of speaking, seemed like a raging volcano; but before he had finished, another commenced in the same angry tone, and after a while another one interrupted him. All were wide awake, and the cry came again, "Speaker! speaker!" and one shook his fist so menacingly that I was afraid they would fight, for I had heard that such things sometimes happen here. One man was so mad, that his eyes snapped and sparkled, and the electricity flew off, and he turned so quickly and angularly that I was fearful his coat tail would too. All the members were restless, raised their hands suddenly, and brought them down again forcibly upon the desks. I did not know before that men were so nervous. After a while, in the midst of the tumult, a little bit of a smart man arose. His voice was so thin and peculiar, that I could hear every word, and away he went into his speech, flashing and cracking like ignited 120 powder, but without any shot. Dear me! if one of our debating school-boys had said nothing weightier in our lyceums, he would have deserved, and would have received a good snowball rubbing. When this little man was through blazing and smoking, he gave a complacent look into the gallery—and sat down. Ah, you little man! you did smartly, wonderfully! You are a fine cooler—all now is quiet and calm.

Another followed, whose speech came like a thunderbolt. All was in an uproar again. Such stamping of feet, and shaking of clenched fists, it seemed to me that they must fight, and I almost wished they would. But then, I knew if they were our fathers, husbands, and brothers, we should cry so to see them fight; and I left the scene from sympathy. What! woman take part at such a place? Why, it would frighten her to death, to have a man shake his fist in her face. And what does she know about using fire-arms, if she felt insulted by such rudeness? She would have to resort to her usual self-defence—tears; and then I know they would be more careful of her feelings.

I witnessed the inauguration of President Pierce. You know one don't care so much about such things for themselves, but for their friends and those they meet. It aids one every way. One is thought quite important after witnessing any thing so grand. One speaks of it with such an air. If no opportunity occurs for mentioning the event, make one. I imagine



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our neighbors will be surprised when they hear that I was present at an inauguration. But I suppose, after all, they will turn up their noses, and say, "she's only a book pedler." Always a mark in one's glory! Indeed, I can hardly realize the truth, that I have seen a President, and am in Washington. I'm sure I shall be a great personage yet. Indeed I must be, for I have been gallanted several times by an Honorable. I wonder if he knew what pleasure his attentions gave me? Just think, attention from an honorable! I'll put it in my book, if I ever write one, and then it will sell.

When I arose this morning, it was snowing, but before ten o'clock it ceased, and I went out to see the procession, having been invited by a lady from our county to her boarding-house on the Avenue. The pavements were sloppy from melting snow, but they were in a fair way of being dried by beautiful silk dresses that were dragged over them, the wearers not deigning to lift them up. What was one silk dress on this great occasion? I felt proud of my dress, if it was so short that it showed my ankles. To be sure it did not cost much, nor was it silk, but one enjoys being sensible, when they have a chance to show that they are so. Every window was filled with ladies, who were waiting and wishing for the procession, and wondering why it did not come, as every one's time was faster than the marshal's. At last it made its appearance away up the Pennsylvania Avenue. Then came a faint sound of drum, drum; it fairly electrified me! By and by the first part passed our window; and still one could see it for more than a mile in extent. The soldiery were all arranged in perfect order. I do not know exactly how, but some of the fair bystanders would exclaim as they passed, "There's the Continentals! there's the Regimentals!" and, I believe, "there's the Instrumentals!" and many other mentals. They all looked very pretty, dressed in uniform of different colors, having plumes that waved so gracefully as they marched! Bands of music were interspersed. Suddenly one heard on all sides, "There's the President!" And then such a waving of handkerchiefs by the ladies! Such exclamations of admiration! "He looks so graceful—so beautiful! Such a fine figure! He has already won my heart!" Thus delighting all, he passed on, seated in his carriage, with head uncovered, bowing, and bowing, and bowing, and bowing. Ah, charming man! You would never have been

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appreciated, if you had not been made President. The crowd was so dense around him that the street was filled; and the whole movement was so uniform that it seemed but one body. One was reminded, in looking down upon them, of a large forest moved by a steady wind. Just as one was getting a little patriotic, a troop of masked beings rushed along from the opposite way. Doubtless they were opposers, and did not like the new President. Their masks were most hideous and laughable; but they were soon put to flight by some of the President's warm friends, of the same grade who will probably return the compliment at the next whig inauguration. I did not hear the oath administered, but went to hear the speech at the Capitol, which was given from an elevated platform on the outside. I was too far from the speaker to hear distinctly, but the address seemed remarkably animated and eloquent. The cheering was spontaneous; and gentlemen far back of me, that I knew could not hear a word, joined in it as warmly as any. At the close, I called on a lady near the Capitol, and waited until the multitude were gone, and then, returning home, I met three untamed-looking Irish girls, who were hastening on, but suddenly paused, and asked me hurriedly if I could show them the President's house. My curiosity prompted me to ask the last one why she wanted to know. She replied, "I want to go and see the President." O Democracy, thou elevator of all! Thou equalizer of the human race! The rich and the poor are equally thy subjects. All nations seek refuge under thy wide-spread banner. O Democracy!

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### LETTER XX.

Richmond, Va.

You see by the date of this, that I am yet on my flying pilgrimage. Yes; with little rest and little happiness. None of that spontaneous happiness that comes, one hardly knows how, which makes the eye bright, the step buoyant, and the heart a radiant beam of joy. I have no such happiness. All that sustains me now is the stoical kind that comes through the will—by the philosophy that teaches us it is best to be happy. And why am I not? I am

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daily with agreeable ladies, with whom I am much pleased, and that is all. They don't understand me. Their associations are not with mine, and life is seen differently through different associations. Besides, there is much aristocracy in Richmond and, seemingly, little unity in itself. They are a disconnected people in many respects, and spiritless regarding the public good. I expect you will attribute this to slavery; but you need not entirely, if at all. On my way here, I stopped at a small city, called Fredericksburg, and a more benevolent and united community I have seldom found, and that is a slave-holding city, containing many very wealthy people. More sensible and agreeable women I have never met. When the thought comes over me of the reception they gave a wandering child, my eyes fill with tears, and I feel that I could throw my arms around them and say how good, how beautiful, is woman! One peculiar characteristic that marks the Southern women, especially mothers and elderly women, is a decided expression of patience and submission, which excites in one a sympathizing love, rather than joy and admiration. I never like to meet with it, for then I know that there has been sacrifice. Woman, here, is no more bound by conservatism, nor more helpless, than many of our Northern women would be, if there was not so much strength and intellect brought forth by necessity, which takes a higher stand than wealth, and the world recognizes it. They exhibit less pride here, in being dependent and helpless, and wear their dependence with more grace, and there is less display of moneyed aristocracy than is generally seen with us. I know a plenty of Northern ladies who are sure to let you know that they understand nothing about work; but here woman is dependent, because of her position, and slavery has in part created that position. They never knew any thing else—take no pride in it—and are, therefore, vastly more agreeable. Woman is more tasteful here, according to my standard, and, physically, more beautiful. There is a softness of features, a delicate fairness, and a plumpness of body, with less vivacity of movement and expression, than with us. Our features grow more expressive, and we are lean and energetic from real thought and labor. If woman was created only to be admired and petted for her beauty, her childlike and tender form, to be loved for her dependence, the Southern woman must receive the palm. But if woman is to use the intellect given her, in real practice—if she is to be self-reliant, as every human

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being may be, and not spend her life in conformity and seeming to be pleased, that she may herself be cared for—if so, we must give this class the preference. When I meet a helpless woman, I feel that she is beautiful enough, if this was a heaven, but this is an earthly world, and abounds in corruption and sorrow. I would ask mothers, as one who loves and suffers when one of her sex suffers, to make their daughters self-reliant—if only in one thing—and if by so doing, they do not place a gem in the character, and happiness in their hands, then God's law is not perfect. Does it not rend the heart of mothers to see their daughters marry for a home? Can they not see that it is for want of some real interest in something else, that they resort to marriage? They are led like 125 lambs, unconscious of the responsibility, and unfit for the position. Not that the sorrow and disappointment that follows is always or often, because she is chosen by the cruel and despotic; no, she hath not wisdom to build her own house, and her want of it subjects her to obedience. In conversing with a literary gentleman upon this subject, he asked—“Why should I not govern my wife? I earn the entire living, and support her without labor; she is as helpless as a child.” Certainly, a helpless being must be governed, and to a great extent will be. This is not true of all, but the number far exceeds that at the North.

I presume that you are desiring to know something of Southern slavery, and if you will receive the experience of one month's life South, I will give you mine, and what I have heard the people say about it. The negroes look decidedly happier here than at the North; but this may be owing to the better adaptation of climate to their constitutions. They know their place and position, and never aim to get above it, neither do they want to. They enjoy themselves independently of the whites, and imitate them only in those things that please their peculiar fancy, such as suavity of appearance and airs and flourishes, in which they quite surpass the original. I have decided, after seeing many Southerners, that they are not so cruel generally as the Northern spirit, with its go-ahead, would be, having the same power. We should have but little patience with their easy, careless ways. There is a greater attachment between master and slave than is believed by us. You may say it is interest that prompts it; and what if it is? It brings comfort to the slave. But I believe

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there is a greater love felt for them by those who aim to do good, and to do their duty, of which I find not a few. A responsibility is felt in giving them religious knowledge, and fitting them for their position as slaves. What more would the Northerner do? 126 Does the Northern mistress make any effort to elevate her hired servant? She pays a mere pittance, which barely supports her, and then she has to work, without receiving any care or lenity other than that prompted by interest. I do not expect you will say from this, as our crazy abolitionists would, that I am advocating slavery. You do not have to go North to here the exclamation, "Slavery is a curse!" With a few exceptions, they say and feel it here, and I am convinced that in speaking thus, they utter what they consider a truth. Then, the question arises, Why do they not rid themselves of it? This question might be asked with reason of those who know how to use their physical powers to sustain the burden of life; but to use the great energy of throwing off the evil, and then take hold of actual labor, would exhibit a superiority that human nature seldom manifests, and only through necessity; even then many perish in the struggle. It is no easy matter for a people who have slavery upon them by inheritance associated in all their habits and customs, and who are effeminated by it, it is no easy matter for them to release themselves from its hold. It is clear to me that at present, as things are now, "the greatest good is to the greatest number," and all evils cure themselves. I fear that the North, in its pretended strength and its officiousness in offering to aid its Southern neighbor, might be likened to the brass kettle that stood on the brink of the river with its companion. The tide arose, and both were washed in. In reply to the proffered aid of the brass one, the earthen said: "O, it is you that I most fear! Keep as far off as ever you can." If the North possesses all the other ingredients of the brass kettle, I fear it is lacking in the noble generosity that prompted the desire, and the aid given would be offered without much justice, either of feeling or act, to the supposed guilty party. You may say it is no excuse for one's holding to a wrong, that they are opposed with a wrong spirit. If 127 it is not right, it is true to human nature. None of us like to be shaken out of our errors, and we Northerners will not be. If the North wants to be so good, she should practise her own theories, or at least tolerate those who have the same fault as herself—a determination not to be driven.

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How many of our boiling abolitionists would be willing to sacrifice all they have, to get rid of an evil, or half their property, even for the liberty of their own kin? A few, no doubt, would be magnanimous enough; and we have proofs of such greatness among slave-holders, and I fear that the number would not be greatly multiplied among the Northerners. But for their honor after so much talk, I pray that the number would not be lessened. It don't cost any thing to talk. They can talk, talk, talk, and nothing will stop their talking until they get a chance to act, but if the act requires any sacrifice, it has the immediate effect of quieting them. So much on slavery now, and more when I have seen more.

In the cars, on my way from Fredericksburg here, I was obliged to share a seat with a gentleman, for want of a vacant one; but this was not at all disagreeable to me, for a noble expression rested on his face, and at a glance I saw him to be of the social class. After entering into conversation, I learned that he was a southern gentleman, a Representative from his State. Ah, another honorable! How favored! But he was so agreeable that I soon forgot his title. If I have pronounced woman the most divine being God ever created, I will pronounce man, in his full stature, with all his endowments and strength, the most noble. I will love and remember this brief acquaintance, as he adds another to the number of those I have met who give me a brighter type of man's divinity.

I am doing little business here, although I have labored enough. The ladies mostly tell me they never attend to 128 buying books, that I must go to their husbands—the same old story as at the North, only much worse. Within a few days I have called on the gentlemen, and have done much better. They comprehend more fully my position. Richmond has some beauty of scenery. It is built on seven hills, on one of which is situated the Capitol, surrounded by a beautiful park, all of which cannot be seen from any one place, and this always lends a fascination to a scene. Within this inclosure a monument is being built to the memory of Washington, and in the environs stands the Governor's house. The weather is delightful—green grass, flowers, and budding trees are here, while you are yet bound in snow. This to me is preferable, and the climate is better adapted for health, beauty, and

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comfort, with a due obedience to the laws that govern them. Little attention is paid to public cleanliness. I have met with several young ladies from the North who are teachers here. One of them, with a real northern spirit, attacked me for being a book-pedler. After using every argument her little head could master, as I did not exhibit any sorrow, she resorted to the last great reason for changing my vocation, under which so many men and women fall, viz., that every body was laughing about me. I concluded her spirit had not become acclimated yet.

Boarding-houses! I'll not attempt to give a full picture of them. The two most prominent characteristics of them are a high price and filth, filth. We are served with hot bread and meat. There is meat enough put on here for dinner to furnish a northern family of the same number for a week at least. I think this may account for the fevers that are so prevalent South. Kitchens—I take a great interest in kitchens, for out of them creeps good or evil, first to the health, secondly to the morals, and thirdly to the intellect. A kitchen at the North is the brightest, and as tidy a room as the house affords—the floor is almost a mirror, from its 129 bright shining paint or clean wood color, and all so comfortable! When one wants to get into a real social mood, they have only to go in and see the pleasant operations. The brick oven door is taken down, and such generous loaves brought forth, not one of which is to be cut until the next day. This is the way to keep children healthy. But don't go near the southern kitchens, if you ever want to eat again. As I accidentally or purposely passed ours, I looked in, and there stood the old cook, sweating and puffing over a huge fire on the hearth, cooking a variety of dishes, and seeming herself but the fit representative of the dark, dismal hole she inhabited. One would be puzzled to tell what was the material of the floor, it was so entirely covered with filth. This exhibits the kitchen of one class, but there is another class of housekeepers that one frequently meets in all parts, and especially in cities. They have beautiful parlors and every thing for company, but their every-day life is mean and miserable. The table is half prepared, the cloth soiled, the dishes broken, the knives black and without handles, and every thing in utter disorder. The family bedrooms are more fit for pigs than for the human species. Pshaw! Don't woman



know that this is no way to live? It is not life. Does she not know that while living in such disorder she does not exhibit, nor can she form a whole and true character? Her family, from the beginning, view the world through a false medium. All is wrong, and all is false. "One may know a man by what he eats." That's true. Shame on the woman that lives thus! Sell your parlor sofas and live decently in your own family! Don't mock your own existence! Falsehood is falsehood, and leaves its stamp!

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**LETTER XXI.**

New-York City.

Since writing you last, dear friend, I have been making a change in my situation. I have left my boarding-house home, and am now living with the woman by whom I am employed. I am not confident that this will be more for my happiness or contentment, but it was for my interest, therefore I made the change. That you may now understand better my position, I will tell you something of the family where I am at present.

The lady, whom I will hereafter call Madam, as I shall often speak of her, is an ambitious woman, mother of five daughters; their ages ranging from four to fourteen. These children it is her darling object to educate sufficiently to obtain for them eligible husbands. When she married, her husband was doing a large business, and supposed wealthy; but in a few years he failed, and, like so many others, they had nothing left but their pride. Some time has passed since then; and now they have taken this house in one of the most fashionable streets in the city, the rent of which his salary just pays, while madam takes a few boarders at very high prices, and, at the same time, has in this house a boarding and day school, of which she is the head; and I was engaged as I wrote you, to take charge of the younger pupils, and, at the same time, pursue my music and French under professors that she employs. I have had, thus far, the charge of the whole school nearly all the time, for it is more than Madam can do to see to her five servants, and attend to the various wants



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of her family. I came here, as I told you, because it was for my pecuniary interest, and, besides that, there was a great deal said by herself about the advantage of living in her family. This advantage has not struck me forcibly yet, but, doubtless, I shall perceive it in time. I 131 came with a great feeling of bashfulness, at the idea of my simple self appearing before such lights, as I had been led to suppose dwelt here; but a week has passed, and I still retain my identity, and as much clearness of vision as usual, despite the watchful eyes of Madam, that have been frequently fixed upon me, as she feels it to be her duty to see that I behave with propriety and decorum; considering me, she says, in the light of a ward, a younger sister or daughter. As I wish you to have some idea of the distinguished ones among whom my lot has been cast, I will give you a sketch of each member of the family.

First, there is Madam herself, having a face that must once have been quite pretty, and is now considerably so, but somewhat *passé*. There is no great depth either of thought or feeling in her countenance, but a great deal of quickness and vivacity, and, when she pleases, a very sweet smile. She speaks carefully, like one who always examines a word before uttering it, and never uses a common expression, even when speaking of the most every-day affairs. Her favorite themes are gentility, propriety, and intellectuality; and upon these subjects, she considers her judgment and taste infallible, and she intends making your humble friend a kind of second edition of herself in this respect. High compliment to my natural endowments, isn't it, that I am capable of being made so much? but it hasn't been proved yet, that I have such capabilities. She may find that, in my case, her judgment has erred. Next comes her husband, a man having naturally some refinement of feeling and considerable generosity of spirit; but the world has left some blemishes on his character; he has lost some of the independence that should be his. But who ever knew an active politician to escape, after years' service entirely uncorrupted? and who can wonder at his zeal, when the office he now holds will be no longer his, if the other party gains 132 the day? He has about the same idea of gentility as his wife, but his greatest pride is in his family. He is of Irish descent; and the most I know is, that he has

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some very significant things engraved on a huge ring that he wears, which he boasts of as being his family coat of arms. Next is a bachelor, who is tall, erect, and so amazingly dignified, that no one presumes to trouble him with questions. I can't give you much of an idea of him, because I, of course, have not dared speak to him, and have only gained a view of his external appearance from occasional side glances, when I knew he was engaged. He looks somewhat intellectual and very sarcastic—rather black looking, even when seen in the sunlight. They say he is very learned—a great linguist—quite a star in his profession, and an able politician; and with such a reputation, how can one expect him to be very familiar? He unbends sometimes sufficiently to talk politics with Madam's husband, as, fortunately, they are both of the same party; and they are often joined in their discussions by another one of their party, an old gentleman, a distinguished lawyer, whom I at first thought very repulsive and severely dignified, but am now learning to regard in a somewhat different light, for his own kind manner toward me, and the almost motherly tenderness of his English wife, who is the most accomplished woman I have ever met, and, at the same time, possesses one of the kindest hearts. They have two children, a daughter of sixteen years, whom I admire, because she has an ambitious spirit, and a son of twelve, who is so handsome, so witty, and so good, that I never see him without feeling inclined to throw my arms around him, and call him my brother. He has, without exception, the most melodious voice that I ever heard; any lady possessing it might consider that she had a fortune. The next character that presents itself is a dyspeptic bachelor, who cares less for politics than the others, and consoles himself for his forlorn condition, by frequently attending the opera. He is a great pet with Madam, because he once came very near being connected with the family by marriage, and because he has money. The sister, to whom he was betrothed, died a short time before the ceremony was to take place; but, since then, he has been considered one of the family, and his wants carefully attended to, to prevent, I suppose, his feeling the need of a nearer companion, and thus forming a new relation abroad. If he is not satisfied with the attention paid him now, he must be a most unreasonable man. Next is a pleasant couple, natives of New England, but who have been living for several years in the South. They are without any pretensions, and, consequently,

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very agreeable, companionable people. Last, but not least, is a Cockney Englishman, who leaves off and puts on his h's as suits his convenience, but which sometimes renders him quite unintelligible. His most striking peculiarity is his gait, which is that of a person walking down hill. The string he constantly harps on, is, "When I crossed the Atlantic." But this person you will doubtless feel great interest in, when I tell you that I have just learned that Madam hopes he will take a fancy to me. I hope we shall always be able to have our carriage, for I know I could never keep step with him, no matter how much training I had, and it's so very awkward to see a couple always out of step; and, besides the awkwardness, I think it would seem rather symbolic of the whole life. How could we bring the world to believe that there was any harmony between us, when it was plain to be seen we could not step in unison—a thing so entirely mechanical? But I believe he is rich, and in that case we can ride. How provident of Madam! How benevolent! What kindness to set apart in her mind, a member of her own genteel family for such an obscure, humble person as I! Supposing at once, from my orphan and sisterless condition, that I must feel  
134 great need of, and anxiety for, a husband, she has, with praiseworthy promptness, selected one for me, and I doubt not she will exert all her influence to secure him. In the mean time, she will instil into my mind ideas suitable for the station she hopes me to occupy. Was ever mortal so blest and so well cared for!

The time, after the five hours of school, is professedly mine, or mine with some exceptions. There would sometimes be little favors that she would like to have me do for her—so she said when I came—and I readily assented, thinking I was dealing with a woman of sensibility, sense, and honesty, rather than a selfish and exacting one; but already I begin to have that horrible feeling of never having my duties performed; because, when I think all is right, something presents itself that I was expected to have seen and done, and I cannot disclaim it, because that is reckoned one of the "little favors" that occasionally would be asked of me, and such is the delicacy of my lady's nature, that she wishes me to see these things and do them without being asked, and if I do not, she is surprised and offended.

**LETTER XXII.**

New-York City.

Teacher in a private school—the very position I have so long looked forward to, and hoped to attain. It is now mine, but alack! if they are all like this, I shall soon abandon them. I cannot be content to pass my life in such a humbug. If the school was mine, I could make it something as I wish; but to have the charge of it, and yet be entirely controlled by another, and that other the last one suited by nature or education to be the head of a school, is more annoying than you would believe. When will parents learn to 135 discriminate a little in selecting a teacher for their children? Now, every woman who loses her husband, and every one who loses her property, opens a school,—provided she is too proud to open a boarding-house,—no matter whether she is qualified to teach or not. Some unusually ambitious ones do both. My lady has a few select boarders and a very select school. She has extravagant prices, and thereby children from the “upper ten,” but, poor woman! she is quite troubled now, thinking how she can dispose of three children, the best scholars she has, but they have a “common” appearance, and so long as her genteel neighbors see these children coming in, they will not send theirs where they can associate with them. But these “common” children behave very well, and their parents are prompt in the payment of their bills—so what can she do? She explained her wishes to me, but I could not assist her—no plausible reason presented itself to my mind that she could offer for their dismissal. When I came, the pupils went wherever they chose about the room, and talked aloud. You may imagine my consternation at such proceedings. I, with my New England ideas of schools, coming into such a Bedlam as this, was fairly amazed. I have been trying to produce a little order, but they think me very cruel, and I am constantly checked by Madam, because, “if the school isn't made pleasant for the children,” they will forthwith be transferred to another. So you see, dear M—, with what care those must step who are dependent upon the favor of the rich. And yet, these very ones who wish all things so pleasant, and who seldom send their children before ten o'clock, because they do not

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have breakfast earlier, these very ones are for ever talking about their progress. They seem to think knowledge is a gift, and not to be acquired by labor. Sometimes as I look around and see the ignorance and heedlessness of parents, and the miserable shams that 136 so many of our private schools are, I wonder how the pupils of these schools, and the children of such parents, blunder into so much knowledge as they do. Madam comes into her school generally about once a day, remains from five to thirty minutes, just long enough to disarrange all my arrangements, and give some new directions about—she knows not what herself. The important thing is, to keep them their full time, so that their parents will not find fault with being troubled by them before school hours are over; and then, at the end of each week, there must be a report made out—a long, wearisome affair—which I must sit and write while the children about me say, “I don't want any report, Father never looks at mine,” or, “Mother never looks at mine;” but Madam has great faith in them, because they declare what astonishing progress the children are making, and will not be convinced that they are of no avail.

My duties, in school and out, increase daily. There is not a moment, unless I am in the street, but what I am liable to be interrupted by some of the children. The house does not afford a niche that is exclusively mine; and all I look forward to now is vacation, when I shall betake myself away, never to return. A family quite so ill-regulated it was never my lot before to be in. One of the greatest troubles Madam has is her servants, and you will readily believe it, when I tell you that in about five months she has had seventeen different cooks. In changing so often, she is frequently left without any; but her oldest daughter, a girl of fourteen, is somewhat fond of the kitchen, quite an amateur in the art of cooking, and really can get a very good dinner, which is fortunate for the boarders, and one would suppose, fortunate for Madam herself—still, a few days ago, she expressed herself greatly distressed that one of her children should exhibit such a vulgar taste. The poor child is rather inclined to be fat, therefore she can scarcely eat or 137 drink any thing in peace, lest she grow more so, and “it is so gross.” But she will doubtless soon escape parental authority, for she is only fourteen, and already expresses great horror of being an old

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maid. I, even I, am advised not to take tea, because I shall spoil my complexion, and, by so doing, I suppose spoil my chance for a husband; and in truth one would judge that the chance was small for any one, from looking on in society, and witnessing the scramble for husbands.

I am requested not to walk out on a Sunday, because for a young lady to do that is to display herself, but I am at the same time requested to go to church, because all the ladies—I don't know what becomes of the salvation of the gentlemen—all ladies in every well-regulated family go to church at least once every Sunday. This she wishes me to do for example's sake. I loaned her a volume of Emerson's Essays to read, and one of her most important criticisms was, that he used some very common words, quite low, some of them, she thought. Every thing common she eschews, common sense with the rest. I hear so much said about propriety and refinement, that I have begun to think there is some great mistake somewhere, for every thing natural seems sure to be pronounced ungenteel. There is some great mistake somewhere. Why should we naturally be so coarse? Her children seem as much confused as I, and are so much criticised. that they are really unable to distinguish what is common from what is genteel. The Englishman that she had selected for me has suddenly gone to California, so her hopes have failed, and my newly awakened ones are—crushed. For the treatment of her servants, if the negroes at the South are treated any the less like human beings, I should like to see it. So much fretting and scolding, and so little of that delicacy and kindness, which a true woman always evinces towards dependents. As an instance of the manner exhibited toward them, at dinner one day, the servant, who had lived with her mother hitherto, and was not experienced, and moreover was very timid, was directed to bring a certain dish from the pantry; but, not knowing, she brought the wrong one two or three times, whereupon there was a general laugh and a sharp reproof of her awkwardness from Madam's husband. And the poor thing was then so confused and blinded with tears, that she could not serve at all, and another was called. In a short time, this gentle girl, so trodden upon, turned upon her persecutors, and “gave as good as she got.” Thus these women, who complain so much of

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the impertinence of servants, by their own overbearing conduct, provoke and bring it upon themselves.

When I came here, I was to be considered as a daughter or sister; but the most important place she expected me to fill was not mentioned—that of upper servant and assistant-general in her family; and now, if any thing goes wrong, especially among the children, there is a glance cast at me, saying plainly, you have failed in your duty. Was there ever so much thrown upon young shoulders? But the worst of all is, I cannot possibly find out what is expected of me. It seems that every thing going wrong is attributed to me. They had, before I came, a French woman; and I can well understand now Madam's remark, that she could not have another, "they are so very troublesome in one's family." I think the best one that could be found to live with her would be a high-spirited, impatient, independent French woman. For myself, in my inexperience, and having faith in fine words, I began too meekly, therefore I must be imposed upon now more than I ever shall be again under similar circumstances.

My reverence for persons, because they are older and know more of life than I, has received quite a check. Age does not always bring wisdom, or goodness, I find. I can pass over and forgive all the scolding and dictating I have to endure, because Madam is in miserable health, and has a great many more duties than she can possibly perform, and all together make her impatient and fretful. But there is no excuse for absolute meanness and injustice—no ill health can excuse that. The whole care of her large family falls upon her, because the husband during the day is at his business, and in the evening is at political meetings, and is of no more assistance to her than any other boarder. I would say to all my young ladies, beware of politicians! They are not partners. They are not help-meets, I will say, since so much is said now-a-days about the wife's being a help-meet. Their interest is not at home, but in politics.

But how far one is led by a foolish pride—no, it does not deserve the name of pride—it is naught but vanity! Here is a woman trying to do so much that nothing is well done, wearing

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herself out attempting to keep in society that she may establish her children richly. And to do this she must neglect these children, leave them without the care that is indispensable for their physical and moral training, leave them, while she is doing all ways to keep them in a fine house and fashionable street, that her genteel friends may not lose sight of her, and that her children may appear in suitable society. Her whole life is a useless effort to sustain herself in a position that is not hers—pretending to be what she is not, nor ever can be. Her school is like every thing else connected with her—a pretence. And I—I don't understand such proceedings. I must leave the situation to some one who can fall into such strange ways easier.

I have written so much about this family that you might have some idea of a New-York school, a New-York teacher, and a New-York lady, and understand how agreeably I am situated, in trying to conform to the wishes of a woman who is as changeable as the wind, and as artificial as an artificial life can make her. There was a scene between us a few weeks since, and my brother would have had me leave, but I thought the poor woman had to change cooks so often, that I would not compel her to change teachers, as vacation was so near, and I had engaged to remain till then.

### LETTER XXIII.

Cambridge, N. Y.

Here I am, my dear M—, rusticating, and as happy as any bird could be, after being confined in a cage six months, but now again in its native woods. I am in the midst of nature, surrounded by green hills, shady woods, and luxuriant meadows. We—my brother and myself—are here boarding for a few weeks, taking breath to return to the city and spend another winter; and I am so happy that I can hardly live fast enough, for I am never so entirely at home as when running in the woods and fields. I wish I'd been a butterfly. I'd call myself one now if I could but get the wings, or a bird—I would rather be a bird, because then I could gladden the sorrowful heart by my sweet song. But I can be neither.



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I am, and must remain, a simple girl, having good aspirations and intentions, mingled with faults and weaknesses, very much like other mortals. But I had almost forgotten what a blessing there is in harmony and quiet. I have been so long in tumult and jargon, and so long under the surveillance of Madam, who, without saying a word, had the faculty of making one perfectly uncomfortable, that I feel now that I am indeed in a new atmosphere.

I left my situation in New-York last week. On the morning of the last day we had a closing scene, in which Madam's part was quite eloquent. She was offended with 141 me because of a misunderstanding of hers, and as I went quietly to explain the affair, and remove her anger, she met me with this sentence, which came with the force of a thunderbolt —“Don't speak to me! I am too angry to hear you speak, Miss—,” I said what I had to say in justice to myself, heard her accusations and complaints, and returned to my own room, praying earnestly that I might never exhibit myself in such a rage, and that I might never see another woman repeat the scene I had just witnessed. If there is ever a time when one feels like smiling in calm and proud disdain, it is when a reasonable being loses such control over themselves, and flies off in an ungoverned passion. And what is the cause? Nothing, or at most a trifle. And this is the mother of five daughters, who looked wistfully on during the conversation, as if they were hearing strange words. This is the woman to whom the education of children is confided. No wonder one who is no better able to control herself finds difficulty in controlling the children under her charge, especially after such examples.

But the duties of a teacher are the most laborious that any one can undertake. It is emphatically a labor of love, for it requires such unselfishness, that it can hardly be compensated by money, and at present is not compensated at all. The storm passed with my lady, and she soon became ashamed of herself, and, in a round-about way, began to apologize. With a formal adieu to her, accompanied by a stiff shake of the hand, with an affectionate good-by from her children, a fervent God bless you from the old gentleman, of whom I told you in a former letter, a warm embrace, and a hope that I might be happier, from his warm-hearted English wife and her daughter, and a stolen kiss from the boy, with

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his beautiful blue eyes and musical voice, I left the place that for the last few months I have called home. Happy in the consciousness that I had gained there some loved and 142 loving friends, but happier in the thought that I was leaving, since those most nearly associated with me were persons with whom I had no sort of congeniality or sympathy.

But Madam was right when she said the advantage of being in her family would be great; though I have been benefited doubtless in an entirely different way from what she expected. That I have gained something from associating with persons of talent I there met may be true; but more important than that, I have learned that to promise and perform are two. I have learned how little you can judge by the fairest words, before you have seen the real, every day life; to avoid above all things to attempt to sustain yourself in a false position, by seeing to what contempt and ridicule one so doing is exposed; and to despise all affectation and pretension, for we shall get credit for all we are in time, and we seldom get credit for more; or, if we do, it does not last long, for our real merits are soon known; and I have seen, when once we begin to assume, how hard it is to appear again in our simple truth, and how a naturally beautiful spirit may gradually be corrupted and sullied by contact with society, in its false and artificial state. Just commencing life for myself, and so young, I could scarcely have had a better lesson; for, though I have lost a little of my blind faith, I have learned to guard myself more jealously from faults that creep upon us before we are aware, so gradual is their approach. Therefore, I do not regret my experience of the past few months. All unpleasant things are soon forgotten, now that I am in such a delightful place. It is so much more natural to be glad than sorrowful.

But after this short vacation, what shall I do? I have a dread of teaching again, and what else remains to me? I will not be dependent. I prefer to sustain myself. But what is there left to a woman beside teaching, unless she sews or goes out to service? To be sure some write, but 143 that is a long, slow way of enriching yourself, for among the host of writers, one is not recognized unless they have rare genius, nor even then for some time, unless they have some friends to help them before the public. One might starve before being known, even with genius. To sew is to ruin your health, unless you have an unusually

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strong constitution, and to engage as a servant one does not feel inclined, after they have educated themselves for something else.

I believe I shall go to the next woman's rights convention, to see if I can't find some new field, some new occupation for woman, and something more to my taste than teaching. They have lecturers, but I am too young for that—young ladies studying law, but I am not logical enough for that—studying medicine I have not strong nerves enough for, and to be a minister is out of the question. None of the learned professions will do, but perhaps they will help me out of my difficulty by suggesting something that will be agreeable to me, and at the same time suited to my capacity. Meanwhile, I will say, sufficient unto the day is the good thereof, and enjoy the present. When I have decided what new step to take you shall hear; but be not surprised at any thing I may undertake, for with the alternative that will always be at hand, the alternative of teaching, I know not what I may do. Adieu!

### **LETTER XXIV.**

New Jersey.

Again, my dear M—, I am teaching. I watched, and waited, and thought, but discovered nothing that I could engage in that would please me better, and then I concluded that it was not best to be disgusted with all teaching, when I had had experience in only one school, and determined to try again, and applied for this situation. But there must be a revolution soon. There are so many waiting for an opportunity to engage in teaching. The market of school teachers, in this vicinity at least, is overflowing. For this one situation there were more than one hundred applicants before me, and it is in no way particularly desirable, being in the country, and a small salary. It was given to me, not for any discovered pre-eminence in talent or qualifications, but because I was from New England, and these people have a partiality for Eastern teachers. But there must be something done. The necessity of the time demands it. The number is constantly increasing of women who look to teaching as the only enduring means of supporting

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themselves. Some new avenues must be opened that have hitherto been closed against woman. She must be allowed to engage in some of the thousand employments that she might engage in with as much propriety as teaching. Men exclude women from what they consider their peculiar vocations, and at the same time themselves hold the highest station in the very business that they all agree is legitimately proper to her. Thus, in all large schools, the public schools in our cities, the head teacher, and the only teacher, who is in any degree adequately remunerated, is a man. In the schools in Boston, the head teacher has his fifteen hundred a year, while the women who teach in the same school, and are employed just as many hours, have only one-fifth as much—the miserable sum of three hundred dollars. And after such encroachment on our province, they are loud in their cries if we meddle with any of their occupations. But despite all their remonstrances, woman will have to do as our friend S—says she shall. I had been conversing with her upon woman's needs, when she remarked in her usual laconic style, and with mischief in her eye, “I care nothing about this talk. If I want any 145 rights I shall step in and take them;” and in glancing at her life, one sees that she has already done so, and without any great opposition or difficulty.

So much for woman's rights, if you please to term it so. These thoughts were suggested by seeing so lately what a need there is of some change by which these teachers may have something to do, since most of them are unable to remain inactive, being in most cases wholly dependent on their own exertions for support.

I am now in a family, a governess, having under my charge four children. We have so many delightful stories and romances portraying governess life, that we come to think it quite a charmed one before we have had any experience. Sometimes, it is true, there are abuses and woes painted, but then some valorous knight always storms the castle and sets the captive free, and in our pleasure at the happy termination we forget all the disagreeables that have preceded. But the real life, be assured, is quite different. That

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is sufficiently matter of fact, and presents a thousand annoyances that you never saw depicted in a book, but which are thorns in the spirit nevertheless.

I came here with the most Christian determination to perform faithfully my duty, be as happy as I could in so doing, and have no eyes or ears for things offensive to me. The family is from New-York, but the gentleman retired from business several years ago, and bought this place, which is considered the greatest gem in the way of a country-seat any where about. At this dismal season of the year, when there is neither snow nor verdure, I can judge very little about it, though the house is very prettily situated, fronting on the Raritan river.

I came before seeing any of them; met the father and mother; surveyed them to see what my chances for enjoyment were; had each of the tyros that I was to guide formally presented to their new governess; and finally was conducted to my room, which I was quite as anxious to see as any thing. But, good Heavens! My spirits sunk, I cannot tell how many degrees, as I gained a view of my sanctuary, that was to be. At the moment I decided that I could not and would not remain, but the next a voice within said, it would be foolish to leave when you are already here, because your room doesn't suit you; and I listened to it, and endeavored to content myself. But you shall hear what it contained: a bedstead, one chair, a faded brown carpet covering the floor, a looking-glass sufficiently large for me to see my woe-begone face in adorning the wall. In one corner of the room a triangular piece of board, resting on the wainscoting, supported a small bowl and pitcher, and shading the one window was a chintz curtain, not exactly black, but such a dingy red that it was about as funereal as black would have been. And this was to be my room during this dreary winter—no convenience for a fire, not a table, drawer, or closet. My trunks were soon brought up, and they made it look a little more habitable. I sat down in my one chair and meditated on the place a governess occupies, half way between a servant and a lady, as the expression is, though my room would indicate that in this case there was no half way, but that it was all servant: still I was to sit at the table with the family, ride in the carriage with them, and sit in the parlor when I chose. What privileges!

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Then I thought on the generosity here displayed in offering such a room to the guide and teacher of their children; and offered, too, by people who are wealthy enough to live without doing any business, but simply enjoy life on wealth already accumulated. But there is no condition so bad that it might not be worse, and I finally consoled myself with the conviction that this would be wholly mine, that I should not have to share it with any one—which one is often expected to do—because the bed 147 was not possibly large enough comfortably to accommodate two.

Having thus somewhat raised my spirits, I returned to the richly furnished parlor to warm myself and make farther observations on my new acquaintances, and give them the opportunity—which of course they so much desired—of scanning their new teacher.

You may ask why I didn't ask for a different room. I should only have heard in reply, "It is just as Mrs. M—, our former governess, had it;" and they would have deemed that a sufficient reason. If I chose to return to New-York, there were a hundred and ten who had applied before me, who would gladly take my place. So you see while there are so many ready to occupy the same situation, all are equally powerless. You may think superior teachers might command some peculiar privileges for themselves; and so they may sometimes, but in too many cases those by whom one is employed are not capable of distinguishing between a person qualified and one who is not. Having no education themselves, how can they clearly see whether another has any or not?

I have been here now more than two months, and have received kindness enough; but the whole idea in which a teacher is regarded needs to be changed. There is no use in saying they consider you an equal, when they do not receive you in society. Not that I regret this non-reception for my individual self so much, especially here, judging from those I have seen who compose the society, but the principle is wrong, and this low estimation has its effect, and there will not be a prevailing high tone and high culture among teachers until people's views and treatment of them undergo a change. The husband, in this case, has theoretically a very high respect for teachers as a body, and thinks they should by

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all means be welcomed into the best society; but he hasn't 148 independence enough to carry his belief into effect, therefore he might as well take the same ground as his wife, who cannot quite believe that even a teacher is as good as she is, because her father was a rich Scotch merchant, and her mother can trace her pedigree back to a lord; and who is so ambitious as to desire to go any farther than a lord—a real lord! And what descendant, however remote, of a lord, is going to visit with her governess?

I tell you, dear M—, there is nothing that amuses me quite so much as our American aristocracy. It is admirable to hear a person, who seldom speaks that she does not violate grossly some of the common and simple rules of grammar—it is admirable to hear such an one boast of their superiority over their neighbors on account of their “family,” their high birth and noble origin. Noble indeed! I fear their so-called illustrious ancestors blush, even now, if they can see their degenerate successors.

My lady here, to the honor of the learned be it spoken, makes no pretension to literary attainments, but contents herself with discoursing largely on fashion, family, genuine gentility, &c. And then to hear the prating about people's keeping in their “proper stations!” A woman, unknown to her, and apparently rather obscure, has for several Sundays taken a seat in the pew she occupies at church, and she wonders “people can't bear in mind where their proper place is, and keep in it.” One of her servants, a few Sundays since, ventured to wait and see if there would not be a seat in the carriage, it was so long a walk—two miles; but the mistress could scarcely express her astonishment at such presumption. “That she should think of riding in the carriage with me!” I fancy the woman expects that in the next world there will be a seat elevated above the others, whereon all lords and ladies, and all the descendants of lords and ladies, will be seated, entirely removed from the contact of the “common,” 149 who will be below them, but who, she hopes, will have learned to keep their proper places before they leave this world. What if a servant *should* get on to that high seat! The harmony of the celestial regions would be disturbed, I fear. She complains bitterly of the growing boldness and impertinence of servants, and was greatly shocked to-day at finding that the waiter, an excellent Irish girl,

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quite above most of her class in intelligence and cultivation, had dared to take a silver spoon to use in her coffee. "Why! the girl must have been born with a silver spoon in her mouth;" and she immediately told her never to take one again. An iron one would do for her.

And this is a specimen of our ladies—ladies who have servants under their control, and have no more desire or endeavor to elevate and benefit them, than if they were brutes. This is a specimen of our wealthy class—our aristocracy. There is no use in saying this is an exception, for one constantly meets with similar cases, so that, from the number of exceptions, one might now consider it the rule. This is a specimen of one class; but there is another, which is not perhaps so large, but from whom we may still hope much, for they have wealth and influence, and, at the same time, live a life more true.

For my teaching here, I am well watched, and have a great many suggestions made to me, which are so easily made when one is merely looking on, but which one does not always find so easy to follow. You know we are all apt to see a better way for doing a thing that we are not engaged in ourselves; indeed, I feel sometimes strongly inclined to suggest some improvements to them here in the management of their children; but I recall the golden rule—I recollect how little I like interference, and desist.

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### **LETTER XXV.**

New Jersey.

You doubtless expect, as you open this letter, a continuation of the trials and tribulations of a governess; but have patience; you shall not hear many of those this time, for I have something better to communicate. But to give you some idea of the manifold duties one filling this important place is expected to perform, listen, while I tell you how innocently I escaped what would have grown into a weekly task had I permitted it. I had, from time to time, been entertained with wonderful accounts of the kindness of my predecessor, and



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the great willingness with which she made herself useful in a variety of ways, by sewing, knitting, &c. During these recitals, I maintained always a profound silence, thinking that I should not be troubled, as I had it distinctly understood from the first, that the time after the hours of school was mine. But I expect my lady thought that her words made some impression; for she came down stairs one day, and brought to me, who was busy with my own sewing, some stockings, saying she wished me to darn them. Not imagining at the moment that she was in earnest, I immediately handed them back, and laughingly replied, that I wasn't going to darn stockings, and pursued my work, quite forgetting the play, as I supposed it, till, by a remark made some time after, I discovered that I had really been expected to do what she had, in all seriousness, requested. I was rejoiced at my mistake; for, had I understood her, I could hardly have refused the favor, it would have seemed so small; and by complying, I should have subjected myself to similar and oft-recurring demands. On one account I have since regretted my refusal. The good man, her husband, whose the stockings were I believe, is, I find, very particular, and has very sensitive feet—what will 151 the lords of creation be particular about next?—and in that case, I should have enjoyed giving him a specimen of my darning. I'm very certain he would have begged his spouse to give me some employment better adapted to my capacity. As it was, I saw neither sense or justice in my leaving my own work, to assist one who sits for hours with folded arms; and as I have since expressed this in words, I have been troubled with no more requests of the kind.

But this is only one instance. It is really astonishing to see how mothers desire to escape, and throw on to some one else, duties and responsibilities which are only theirs. They seem to wish and expect to have some one near them that will perform all that they are too indolent themselves to do. If they would leave you entirely to yourself it would do, but that they will not. They must annoy you with their ignorant dictation. They can look on and criticise, but for doing any thing themselves, they are worthless. And yet many of these mean to be, and think they are, excellent mothers. But they have no thought. Oh! if there is

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any one thing to be intensely desired, and earnestly striven for, it is the more thorough and more general education of woman.

The life of a governess is one of ceaseless conformity; therefore, a person who has a marked identity, and an instinctively strong desire to retain it, I would advise never to adopt this life. For myself, I have found a new mode of sustaining myself, and gladly do I leave teaching to those who enjoy it, and are naturally suited for it. I believe I am not. If I am adapted to the teaching itself, I am not to its accompaniments, and if I am ever obliged to make another trial of it—willingly, I never will make another—I shall have my pupils in my own house, entirely removed from meddling parents.

I am now doing penance, imposed on me for six weeks, after which I am going to travel in some of the Southern 152 States, for the purpose of obtaining subscribers to standard and popular books, and supplying the books subscribed for. Is this novel plan the product of my brains? you will ask. No; with all their activity, when I was wishing to escape teaching, they never devised this. But after living here in seclusion three months, I went up to New-York for a few days, to refresh myself with a little society, and while boarding there with my brother, there came a slight snow-storm, and with it came an angel of the snow, so I named her, and so, indeed, she seemed to me, for through her I shall soon be released from my captivity. My angel came in the form of a joyous, fresh-hearted young woman, who was bound for the South on the business I have described to you, and wishing to stop in New-York for a few days, to see the publishers, some benevolent little fairy sent her to the same house where I was sojourning. I believe a mutual attraction drew us together, for somehow we were soon talking very familiarly. Each gave something of their past life, and their hopes and aspirations for the future. She explained her mission to me, and in a short time I had decided to go with her, and go immediately, if I could be released from my engagement here, which then wanted three months of its fulfilment. For several reasons I believed that I should obtain a release without difficulty, and at once wrote, expressing my

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intentions and wishes, and in a few days came myself, having promised to meet my good angel on the cars on her way to Philadelphia.

But on arriving here, you can have no conception of the storm that awaited me. It had been brewing ever since the reception of my letter, and now spent its fury on my devoted head without mercy. I had come with the full expectation of leaving the next day, and having, as I thought, good grounds for this expectation; but now I sat with the husband on one side, and the wife on the other, and I the luckless mark at 153 which both were aiming their shafts. My letter had been misunderstood, or not understood at all, for like ignorant people usually, they had blundered through it, and became so furious while reading my intentions, that the sentence, saying I should do so and so, with their permission, had been entirely lost upon them. And now all kinds of accusations were hurled at me—all sins of omission and commission were brought in array before me—sins that I was unconscious of having committed, but which had been carefully remembered and saved up against such a time as this. In fine, if you were ever the victim of anger, when it is unchecked by any delicacy, or by any reason even, but has full and free sweep, you will understand what my position was.

In the mean time, owing to some misunderstanding between them, the assault was diverted from me for a few moments, and a slight conjugal skirmish ensued, which ended, as usual, in the utter discomfiture of the wife, and the whole of which was so ludicrous, that it was with difficulty that I suppressed a smile. But I was not long spared. The attack upon me was soon renewed, and carried on vigorously for some time. As soon, however, as I could recover my senses, for I was at first almost stunned by this unexpected pelting, I explained the letter, assured them that I had no intention of breaking my word, no intention of leaving, unless they would allow me to do so, and thus obtained a little remission in the violence of the storm; though the great lady still, at short intervals, probably to avenge herself for her late defeat with her husband, assailed me with small shot, which, being without substance or point, fell harmlessly upon me, having no other effect than to cause a slight irritation. Finally, she was herself wearied, or had exhausted her ammunition, or

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both, for she left the room. I then requested to be released from my contract, as hereafter it would be unpleasant for both, to be so intimately associated 7\* 154 as we had been hitherto. I was firmly and obstinately refused. That was asking too much. But, thanks to their generosity, which is not yet quite overgrown with selfishness, it was agreed at last that I should go at the expiration of six weeks, half the remaining term of my engagement. Thus the assailants were satisfied, peace was restored, and I resigned myself to my six weeks' penance. But I trust I shall never occasion another such hostile demonstration; nor did I this time, consciously, and therefore was not in the least expecting it, and had no time either to prepare for or avoid it.

The great lady, the descendant of a lord, protested she had never treated me as a governess, but as a sister. What condescension! This is the second time I have heard this, and from two different women with whom I have lived; therefore I have concluded that it is a stereotyped compliment, intended to atone for all kinds of impositions. If it is not, I would like to inquire what they mean, for there must be a wide difference in our understanding of the sisterly relation, if this is it. But setting aside all such affectionate ties, I would be quite satisfied to receive courtesy and justice; and before this can be, there must be more culture and enlightenment.

When school hours are passed, and my mind is unoccupied, you can, from your own experience, judge how many little arts I practise to hurry time, who seems to go at a snail pace, and yet we know that he is ever on the wing, and pauses never. But my six weeks is drawing to a close, and then I shall be free—free, and be off to the sunny South, living more in the sunshine, travelling, and gratifying my desire to see something of the world. It is an experiment, and a new undertaking; but I have looked on the bright and the dark side. Let the result be what it may, I am leaving nothing that I can regret, and trusting for success and protection in my own truth, honesty of purpose, and 155 strong will, and in the faith I still have in the goodness of mankind, I shall make the attempt. I shall join my *compagne de voyage* in Richmond, and you may expect to hear from me there.

**LETTER XXVI.**

Richmond, Va.

This morning I arose, as usual of late, with the heart-ache; but heart-ache don't exclude one from labor; and it is well that it does not, for labor cures—successful labor. I have been quite sick several days, and I expect it proceeded mostly from the heart, for this morning an antidote was sent that cured me. There came a bright, beautiful bird of emigration, in the person of the young lady that was to have come with me. I knew nothing of her approach until she was here. I commenced my labor with a languid step, and, as I was passing up one of the streets, I saw at some distance a familiar face, the sight of which gave me a sensation of joy and pain, a startled remembrance; but where or when I had ever seen the lady, I could not tell. As she approached, smiled, and extended her hand, my lovely companion was remembered;—forgotten her I had not, but it was so unexpected that memory was lost. To believe that it is real, that it is true, I have sunned myself in her radiant eye, until I am wholly warmed to life again, and, thank God, so joyfully, that I am mated. To be mated, is of vast importance to the human race. To be rightly so, is of greater. One has only to ask the guidance of God, and seek with a clear eye and good heart, and a good mate will be given to them. A blank is drawn, because it is sought by a blank. A good understanding easily discovers the blank, and shuns it, and the less that are drawn, the less there will be to 156 draw, for who ever knew any thing to exist without a counterpart. Get the mote out of your eye, and a blank will be easily distinguished. Young man, and maiden, choose rightly, and then you can sing and coo always as we shall. But my mate need only sing when she wants to. I shall not tell her, because I have chosen her for my mate and partner, and am the oldest, and have the most capital, and because I teach her a little, that she must sing, and that she must not, at the nod of my will. No, we are partners, we are equals, and equality is the only law of a perfect union, and it will allow each to be as noble as their natures are capable of being. It

is God's law; and the world may practise against it, but they cannot change its rewards and punishments, nor shun its penalty. So let us all obey, and all sing.

**LETTER XXVII.**

Richmond, Va.

This morning, dear M—, I found myself in Richmond. So far as events are concerned, the best description I can give you of my journey hither is contained in the one sentence—I left New-York yesterday, and arrived here to-day. As short and threadbare as the sentence sounds, even so did the day seem; for I was shut up in my own mind, so much occupied in reviewing the past, and trying to pry into the future, that I was quite lost to the present. In my hurry and anxiety to explore the dim space before me, childlike I sighed for the famous “seven-league boots,” wished that I possessed a prophet's ken with which to pierce the future, that I had a talisman to insure success, or that some guardian spirit of the air would direct my steps, forgetting for the time that

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“Our acts our angels are—or good or ill, Our fatal shadows that walk by us still;”

forgetting that we may possess the talisman in our own will—that we shape our own course.

Busy with such idle thoughts, I was borne rapidly southward. Only once, as we sailed down the Potomac in the evening, I emerged from my inner self, brought out by the sound of a bell, which, ringing out on the still night air, startled and aroused me to inquire the cause. I learned that we were passing Mount Vernon. Sometimes this simple fact would have awakened a long train of thought, but now nature was too weary. It only inspired an emotion of reverence, and with a feeling of pleasure at this tribute to the memory of the great departed—great in the highest sense of the term, because morally great—I settled myself again to repose.

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A change from the boat to the cars, a sleepy ride of several hours, and at six this morning I reached here. The conductor accompanied me from the depot to the hotel, and insured for me there every kindness and attention, by introducing me to the proprietor as a lady travelling alone. Having taken breakfast and made some inquiries after my friend, for of her whereabouts I knew nothing, excepting that she was somewhere in the city, behold me with hopeful heart and gladsome face—for the morning was glorious, and I was full of courage—behold me making my way into the street, taking with me a living proof of my recent change of latitude, in the person of a shining ebony companion, who was to guide me to the post-office and wherever else I might wish to go. The quick intelligence, easy movement, and perfect silence of my guide interested me. There was no questioning, no stupid misunderstanding or awkwardness. I had only to say where I wished to go, or signify the direction by a motion, and mutely he led the way. But I soon dismissed him and pursued my way alone. For some time I sought my mate in vain, but at last fortune favored me. I had learned her abiding place, and was rapidly walking thither, when suddenly a remembered face met my view, a hand clasped mine, a warm breath was on my cheek, and a familiar voice said, “Is it you?” I was no longer alone—my sister spirit was found, and in the fulness of our joy we gave care to the winds.

And what shall I tell you of Richmond—Richmond, boasting, like old Rome, of her seven hills? My strongest impression on arriving was, that I had suddenly passed from the chilly presence of winter into the warm, genial atmosphere of spring. The trees are re-robed, the flowers are in bloom, and the temperature is delightful.

Toward evening, impatient to make trial of my business talent, I dressed myself with scrupulous care, that I might not, at least in my external, offend the taste of the fastidious I might meet; selected my books, found a quarter of the city which my friend had not visited, asked her what she did and what she said, and now that my time had actually come, wished most heartily that I had been content to teach all my life rather than subject myself to this; but, seeing it was too late to retreat, summoned all my courage and advanced.

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To show you how poor my memory, or that I did not learn my lesson before starting, you shall hear of my unlucky blunder at my first call. Scarcely had I seated myself in the richly furnished parlor, ere the lady of the house made her appearance. I immediately explained my errand, and presented my books for her inspection. Her consternation amused me. I had evidently gone beyond what her philosophy had dreamed of. She looked alternately at me and my books, and at the same time seemed to be puzzling her head to think if she had ever known a parallel to this. But no; experience failed, and she had to wonder still. Speaking somewhat bitterly of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," I called her attention to a book that I knew gave a more impartial view. But, alas! what malicious elf prompted the remark I know not; perhaps it was only the effect of the scrutiny I had been undergoing, and to which I had not yet become accustomed; any way, I told her 'twas the counterpart of "Uncle Tom!" I saw she suddenly determined not to take the book; but I did not correct my mistake, for not till long after I had left did I discover it. Doubtless the good lady thought that if I was vending counterparts of Mrs. Stowe's work, I should be frowned down at once, and, prompt in the discharge of her duty, had been trying the power of her own glances; and to say truth, I felt myself, if not absolutely vanishing into space, at least involuntarily drawing into myself as a kind of self-protection.

My next call was at a house, indicating outwardly and within, wealth—yes, wealth in abundance. The lady, to whom I handed one of my books, turned it over as a something she had heard of, but had no sort of interest in; made no motion toward opening it—indeed, I fear she did not fully realize that it was a book, and remained all this time standing and regarding me with an intense stare. Having surveyed me to her satisfaction, she returned the book, and told me she wished nothing of the kind, I was relieved, for my pity was rapidly overcoming every other emotion, having decided in my own mind that the gift of speech had been denied to this human sister of mine. In no way disheartened at my want of success, I quickly escaped from an atmosphere so uncongenial, and pursued my way, feeling already, from my slight experience, more at home. Soon coming to a house, whose exterior, for some reason, pleased me exceedingly, I paused a moment,



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entered, and found it was the same spot whereon formerly stood the residence of Chief Justice Marshall. I know not whether the present residents are descendants of the Chief Justice; I know not the lady's name who 160 met me, but it matters not. Always hereafter in recalling Richmond, with a feeling of pleasure memory will turn to her, for she was the only one who, in the experience of to-day, fully realized my idea of the true lady; kindness of heart, intellectual culture, and ease of manner combined. She spoke of the former high reputation Richmond enjoyed for the refinement and high culture of its society, and hoped I would give the present citizens a more literary taste. Thanks for the benevolent wish, however unavailing—thanks for the genial kindness of her own manner. She gladdened my heart, renewed my faith and hope, and gave me new courage.

I made several other calls, but with no success; and I will not weary your patience by recounting them. I returned not in the least discouraged, and have been drawing pictures for the entertainment of my sister in adventure; and I presume her entertainment was decidedly greater than yours will be, it is so much easier to draw pictures with the tongue than with the lifeless pen. You must not expect me to describe for you any curiosities of art, for we are not travelling to see sights, you know; consequently, all the curiosities will be in the way of human character. When I know more of Richmond you shall hear more; but, in the mean time, let me hear from you, for you know with what joy I receive letters from dear New England—land of my birth, and from you, of all friends the dearest.

### LETTER XXVIII.

Richmond, Va.

Richmond may be a fine place to live in, if you are rich. These seven hills are doubtless very poetical in idea, or if you have a carriage at command; but if you are entirely dependent 161 on your own powers of locomotion, you will soon find both your patience and strength exhausted, and yourself quite insensible to the poetry. The few hills of Boston have been objected to by strangers, but it will not compare with Richmond. Not that these

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lack beauty, if you could only escape climbing them. Some of the residences on these heights are delightful, and the view very fine—but it's so tedious getting up.

I was amused to-day by the remark of a gentleman, a native of the place, who, in speaking of the money-getting spirit that has found its way here, and of the moneyed aristocracy, that it seems is supplanting the older and better, said, it was now the height of the ambition of the citizens to get a “place” on Shokkoe Hill, which, I suppose from this, is *the* hill, and belongs exclusively to “upper-tendom.” Laudable ambition! But unlike most, I suppose they reach the desired height; for he must be a witling, indeed, who, by bending his whole energy to the making of money, fails at last. But the golden age of this modern seven-hilled city seems rather to have passed, and it is now enjoying that age in its more literal sense. There seems to be enterprise, activity, and a good deal of business; but in gaining this spirit, as is almost invariably the case, they have lost sight of the importance of the other. But we see how, every where at the present time, especially in our large cities, the hurry of business, and a luxurious gaudy display in material things, is taking the place of the plainer but more elegant and chaste of former days. And this has a meaning; for our surroundings always betray more or less our true spirit and taste. In truth, as one looks upon the jostling scene sometimes, one would think men had entirely lost their belief in the immortality of the soul; for how do these merely shrewd business speculators consider themselves fitted for the next world? What do they expect to enjoy there? Occasionally a voice steals forth from some mere spectator of this medley, warning them not to forget the higher life; but it is soon drowned in the unceasing din, and only finds a home and a response in a few spirits. But, perhaps this is all necessary to growth—to a healthy maturity. Perhaps Richmond will find herself more than compensated for this apparent loss of her old style and standing, which some of the citizens seem to lament, in the increased activity of her inhabitants; and the tree will prove more elegant than at first, because larger and stronger, though at one time in its growth somewhat one-sided.

We remain here but a few days. To-morrow we intend going on to Petersburg. As we were to stop so short a time, and, therefore, could not have time to visit all; since my

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advent among the ladies, of which I told you in my last letter, I have been calling on that class whom we designate as professional men. I find them possessing what we at the North usually ascribe to Southern gentlemen—polish of manner, generosity, and a gallant bearing. But for the last, it strikes me some of the younger gentlemen have been too often told of the latter characteristic, and make it too prominent; at least, my taste is better pleased by a few that I have met, who are equally gallant in any sensible use of the term, but more quiet and plain. They realize more fully my idea of the high-bred gentlemen of the Old Dominion. But more pleasant than all this, is the real warmth and pleasure with which they meet one from the North. Nothing that I have seen yet pleases me so much as this accessibility, if I may so call it, that one finds among Southerners. We are as firm and true friends at last, but we are less impulsive, and so cautious, that we hesitate in making any advances, or committing ourselves in any way, forgetting that nothing is so grateful to the stranger's heart, as to be at once cordially received. And what avails all this caution? 163 It simply inspires caution in return; and we go on, each afraid of the other, when one frank word would set us free.

Sometimes by virtue of being a Northerner, and owing to the decided frankness of those I meet, I get a hint, a suggestion, a friendly caution, which it is expected I suppose that I shall profit by, and which amuses me not a little. To-day an old gentleman, upon whom I called, quietly remarked, without the smallest provocation from me: "At the South we have eleven commandments—the eleventh, each one mind his own business." The remark was made in the utmost good nature, and of course I received it in the same spirit, answering that this commandment was probably as well remembered and as well kept as the other ten, by whose restraints we have been blessed from Moses till the present time. But this is the first that I have encountered of that suspicion with which some regard us, from the long interference and dictation they have experienced; nor can we wonder at it, when we consider our own nature, and ask ourselves how well we brook being constantly and importunately reminded of our duty, when we are doing the best we can, or even if we are not doing what seems the best to others—we must be our own judges. Reason says it is

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very foolish to persist in a wrong, no matter what the provocation; but so long as we each do it, more or less, let us not be too severe upon some of our friends who seem to us to be doing the same thing. I know not what I may see, and think, before leaving Virginia; of course I have seen comparatively nothing yet; but, to be honest, I have felt almost as much disgusted at the incessant talk kept up by some at the North as the Southerners themselves, and I think the impression of any one upon first coming here would be much the same, if they would frankly express their feelings. There is such a neat and cheerful appearance among the mass of the negroes, and one sees those 164 too old to be of much service so well cared for, that one involuntarily compares them with the servants and the poor of the North.

Having wasted my eloquence upon a lawyer—it was entirely wasted, for he took no books; he finally told me that he felt somewhat impoverished from a loss he had lately sustained—the loss of a valuable negro, worth some fifteen hundred dollars. He himself watched by him three nights, but it was of no avail—he died. I expressed due admiration of his kindness and care; but then, no matter what the motive that prompted this attention, the servant was doubtless gratified and made comfortable by it. There is scarcely any motive of action but what, if we really scan it, is somewhat selfish.

Yesterday my companion and myself, wishing for quiet, and a taste of the country, went out to Hollywood Cemetery, which seems to be the Greenwood of Richmond. We had walked farther than we had been directed, but not finding the place, inquired of an old man whom we met, who, with staff in hand, seemed bound to some modern Mecca or Holy Land. He directed us about three miles out of our way. For a long time I felt quite indignant toward the old pilgrim, thinking he had considered us Sabbath breakers, and had taken it upon himself to punish us by sending us amiss. But it at last occurred to me that, abstracted and intent as he had been on gaining his own shrine, he misunderstood us, thinking we inquired for the seminary, instead of the cemetery; as I half caught the remark, as he went on his way, that we could see the tops of the chimneys from there, but did not notice it, believing that I did not hear aright. But at last we came back, and found

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the cemetery, which is well situated, but is not yet in its prime, because it is too early in the season, and the ground has not been long laid out. It promises to be exceedingly pretty in a few years. Within the city the most attractive thing I have seen is the Park belonging to the Capitol. This is really beautiful. For its size I have never seen a finer. It only wants a fountain to render it complete.

### **LETTER XXIX.**

Petersburg, Va.

Imagine, my friend, two of the Amazonian race, unexpectedly coming to your house: look at them; they are very like yourself, perhaps somewhat larger; hear them talk of the past and future; hear them tell what they have done and intend to do; listen to their common conversation, and then imagine your wondering look and puzzled thought, and you will have the picture of your humble friend and her companion, at and after their arrival at their present home. We find in this nest all the birds still remaining—still watched over and cared for by the parents. They can use their wings—oh, yes! but neither necessity, nor a foolish, restless ambition has ever urged them to attempt a long or high flight. Occasionally one hops forth from the nest, warbles a song, chatters with her neighbor, takes a short flight, but soon contentedly returns. And why should they not be content, having no care, and no desire to know what lies in the dim space above and beyond them. But such innocent birdlings must be cautious. On some of your short flights some watchful one may cage you, and the cage might not prove so agreeable as the nest. But you, my friend, are experienced in both; which, think you, is to be preferred?

Petersburg has something the appearance of a Northern town. Every one here seems to be engaged in active business, and for its size, there seems to be a great deal of enterprise, and a great deal of dirt. I have been to-day among the fairer portion of the community, and fairer they are in 166 this instance (pardon me, gentlemen of Petersburg;

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but I need not ask you to, your gallantry will pardon it at once), fairer, and with less stiffness of manner than I have seen hitherto.

One lady saw “no impropriety” in my present employment, but was astonished at my distaste for teaching, it was “such a genteel occupation.” It must be singular obtuseness in me, that I have never discovered wherein the extreme gentility of teaching consists. Perhaps the difficulty arises from attributing different meanings to the word genteel. If it means refined, certainly it is of little importance what the occupation is, so the character possess native refinement; and a sufficient proof to me that the position has nothing to do with this, I have seen in servants who, in point of true character and true refinement, were by far superior to those by whom they were employed. There is, perhaps, no grace of mind, no attraction, more difficult to counterfeit than refinement. But the peculiar gentility of teaching must consist in its comparative freedom from bodily activity; or is it because it is so intellectual, or because one can be “dressed up?” Musing on the importance that society, the self-constituted critic, attaches to one's vocation, congratulating myself on my own freedom, and concluding that the best way is for each to “do with their might what their hands find to do,” I still continued my calls

I have been through the oldest part of the town to-day, and am much pleased with the old-fashioned, substantial elegance to be found in some of the houses, and the ancient appearance of the houses themselves. At the North every thing is so new and fresh, and in our small towns, and the environs of our large cities, there are so many of those modern cottages, very picturesque to the eye some of them, but lacking both comfort and convenience, that it is a pleasant change to find the plain, unpretending dwelling here, surrounded, 167 as one sometimes sees it, by goodly trees, the growth of many years, and, perchance, adorned by flowers which, in richness of hue, and perfectness of development, surpass any I have seen hitherto. This aged and slightly venerable appearance of things, combined with the deliciously soft temperature, made me quite dreamy; and I had a glimpse, as it were, of the enchantment of some foreign lands

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possessing these attractions in a much greater degree, united with the incalculable additions that art—glorious art furnishes.

If St. Paul could rise up here, I am certain his pious heart would experience a thrill of joy, to see with what fidelity his precept to wives is heeded. The subjection seems to be admirable. I think that time-honored precept must be included in the catechism, and taught from childhood up, else the practice could not become so perfect. As for me, I always rebelled in spirit against this, and sometimes in word; but, alas! what rashness in me! I have here expressed my intention, if the occasion should ever require, of rebelling in act. What folly, and what effrontery! Already I feel like a conspirator, plotting the downfall of the state—already I hear the footsteps of the officers pursuing me, and see myself arraigned for sowing the seeds of heresy and disloyalty. But what excuse shall I offer to palliate my offence? Shall I plead perversion of nature, or a perverted education; or shall I confess to an innate propensity to rebel against the powers that be? This last is the real truth, I believe, for I inherited my full portion of the fatal characteristic of our Mother Eve.

But what called forth my treasonable suggestion was, finding a lady, a charming woman, who really wanted some of my books, but could not take them. I might call on her husband, and if he chose to take them she should be very glad. How grateful to the lords of creation such graceful deference to their will must be! But I must think it is 168 partly owing to the climate, after all; consequently any Socrates whom I may meet, who has unfortunately united himself with a Xantippe, and has not the same courage to bear the affliction that the most venerable Grecian philosopher had, to such an one I shall recommend a residence in the South, fully believing that it will prove as beneficial in this, as in some bodily maladies.

People talk a great deal about the virtue of humility; so I suppose it must be a virtue, though I could never see why one could not know their own capabilities, acknowledge and act upon them,—and I believe they do; and this apparent humility, we find sometimes is nothing but affectation. To be sure we are apt, those of us who are sincere, to seem

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as strong as we can; but that is natural; it is the partiality of the mother for her child; and, as Mr. James says in one of his novels, though we always set ourselves a little too high, the world always makes the abatement; therefore so long as this is known, and the world understands making the abatement, it is just as well as though we placed ourselves exactly at the mark. But I find people, who are pretty well satisfied with themselves, seldom quarrel with the world; or if they do, it is with such good nature that the world doesn't mind it. These very humble people usually first find fault with themselves, and then feel licensed to find fault with others.

I was pleased to-day with the easy independence and frankness of a lady that I called upon. Her very manner of sitting in her chair was self complacent. She found I was from the North, and then followed a dissertation upon the manners, character, and mode of living at the North. She pronounced us cold-hearted, cruel—in fact quite devoid of heart and conscience; our servants poor, and not cared for; our ladies indolent, poor housekeepers, and without half the responsibility of their Southern sisters—and all 169 these opinions she declared with such entire satisfaction as to their truth and soundness, and with such good-humored smiles at her own happy hits, that I was really charmed. Some persons, more sensitive than myself, might consider this mode of treatment quite rude; but I liked the character displayed so much, that it was of little importance whether her opinions reflected upon me, and were true or not. I enjoy so much to meet people on this independent platform, when they only speak right out—regardless of pleasing or displeasing—for this seems to be the true way. We all have our own opinions—then why not express them? I did not tell the fair lady that this evening, for the edification of an absent friend, I should descant as freely upon the South and Southerners, as she had for mine upon the chilly North and its chilling inhabitants. But I doubt not she would have heard my criticisms as patiently and pleasantly; and, perhaps, have thought them equally as just as I did hers. Thus it is, that despite the best intentions, and most earnest look of another one, we see a thousand minor virtues in the friend who has nourished us from infancy, which to the recent acquaintance are totally invisible.



Trusting that you will not be so dazzled by this brilliant scintillation of wit and wisdom, as not to be able to receive the light of another, I will leave you with a good night.

**LETTER XXX.**

Petersburg, Va.

Alas! is it not enough that I must know myself a pedler, without having so ungenteel a truth thrust upon me, and by whom? Why, by the jailer! But then people, in this scandal-loving world, do so like to remind one of things disagreeable, that I might have expected this. But don't let 8 170 me too much alarm you, dear M—; I am not yet in jail for teaching insubordination to wives, nor for breaking the civil law, though if I had my due, I should be there for the latter I suspect. But it is as true a saying as it is trite, that the wicked often go unpunished; and as I come under that class, I may perhaps share the advantages of the position. But did it ever occur to you that there is a great deal of meaning in that sage remark, about the wicked, and a reason for it? Those considered the most wicked, are by no means always really so—for while they say and do openly what they wish, their neighbors, through sly and crooked ways, and by all manner of concealments, do much worse, but do not have credit for it, because their deeds have not the broad light of day upon them. Like two rogues at school, the one for breaking the rule is always receiving the ferule, or the *more potent* kindly lecture, while the other, rejoicing in his own dexterous management, always escapes. I, unlucky wight, was always the one caught, which doubtless renders me more charitable toward other offenders pursued by the same fatality. But pardon this digression: I was going to tell you how near I came to being lodged in that safe receptacle for lawless people generally—the jail. Ignorant of any danger, and intent upon gaining a subscriber, I was discoursing upon the various merits of my books to a learned member of the bar, hardly conscious in my earnestness of the presence of a third person, when I was roused by a voice, declaring emphatically that I was doing what I had no right to. Turning to see who this questioner of my rights might be, I beheld a well-conditioned personage, rather on the Falstaf order, who, with imperturbable gravity,

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repeated his declaration; and added, that I was liable to be taken up for peddling without a license, and that he was the keeper of the jail! Foreseeing what my fate might be, I laughingly enumerated the advantages of a permanent home, and added, that judging 171 from his own appearance, that of a bon-vivant, I had no doubt that the physical wants of his family were well attended to.

Having secured my subscriber, and found that the required license could not be procured there, I hastened away, fearing, if I remained longer, some active measures would be taken at once, the legal gentleman being present. Rut before I had proceeded far, on entering an office, I was followed by the Commissioner of Revenue, who reminded me of the law, and the consequence of my non-compliance with it. In my former letter, you remember I imagined these woes coming upon me, though from a different cause. It must have been a presentiment, however, for I was then ignorant of this offence. At first, with my usual perversity, I expressed no intention of getting a license; but finally, seeing the contest between duty and gallantry made evident by the remark of the gentleman, that he knew how to deal with gentlemen, but with ladies he was at a loss; my generosity was touched, and I at once signified that I would call and comply with the exactions of the law.

For venial sins, I believe one is taken before the mayor, and he passes judgment; so, if you want a ridiculous picture, please to imagine two young ladies brought before the mayor, upon a charge of peddling without license. My gravity could never have endured that, I am sure; and I fear the worthy magistrate's would have been endangered as well. But to preserve to Virginia the long-cherished reputation of her sons for gallantry, we spared them from taking any more decided measures.

To-day, for the first time since leaving New-York, I have heard some music. Truly hath Shakspeare said—

“The man that hath not music in himself, Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils.”

How many and varied charms it has! How it rouses us to new endeavors, new aspirations, and makes us feel strong for life's conflict! When we are heart-sick, weary of the world, its thousand annoyances and vexations, ready to set ourselves down in despair, and almost wishing we might quit the scene, with what gentleness it soothes us! How lovingly, how like a mother it draws us from our gloomy thoughts, never chiding, but with persuasive, tender tones, reminding us of the bright Beyond, and bidding us on. Placed in this world, absorbed as we are by the cares of life, God has given us music, that we might not forget heaven, for by its harmony we are awakened to new consciousness of the glorious life to be ours hereafter.

I was indebted for my music to a young lady to whom I was introduced by her father. The old gentleman was so much pleased to see a young woman who was doing something for herself, that he decided at once to take some book; but what it should be, his daughters must determine. He would go with me to them. I found a happy home circle, and heard some old familiar songs that carried me back to my own home.

In personal beauty, I think, we shall have to yield the palm to the Southern ladies, judging from those of Virginia I have seen. You may think the comparison comical, but there is to me the same difference between the ladies of the two sections of the country, that there is in the flowers. They seem to me here like nature's pets, but not in this case spoiled by the petting. They are like flowers that grow up with just enough of sunshine and shade for their perfect development—neither scorched nor chilled. This fine exterior is doubtless partly owing to their freedom from labor, but more, I think, to the climate. Do you remember a description by Willis of the expression of the faces of Bostonians, caused by the east wind they have there so much? If you do, you will understand what I mean, for the same 173 expression is to be found not only at Boston, but more or less every where at the North; and it is this peculiar appearance that characterizes us, which one does not find here. They have not our cold winds, to make their faces sharp and thin.

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It is always affirmed that Northerners, who come to the South and live, very soon lose their enterprise and activity, and become at last more indolent than those who have always resided here. This I have hitherto regarded as quite derogatory to us, nay, most unpardonable backsliding; but it is astonishing how the severity of my judgment softens, as this villainous heat increases. I am almost ready, indeed, to pronounce it an unavoidable consequence, now that I feel within myself such a growing inclination to idleness. Wise arrangement of Providence! By sinning ourselves, and feeling the need of pardon, we are prevented from becoming altogether uncharitable to others!

### LETTER XXXI.

Petersburg, Va.

If this letter finds you happy, pleased with the world and contented with yourself, don't read it; lay it aside till you are in as black a mood as I am now; till, in bitterness of spirit, you feel like saying to the world, "I am not of thee,—therefore leave me to myself." At such a time, this letter will come to you with a relish. As quick as the shifting of scenes upon the stage, even as momentary, is the change in our spirit from brightness to gloom. In the play, a word, and the scene is changed; in life, a word, perhaps a sentence, and the sunlight of the spirit is gone, and, in its place, dark ominous clouds. The incident that has occurred so to overcast my sky I will not now relate. It is enough that it has 174 roused all the scorn of my nature, and I feel to-night like bidding defiance to the Fates themselves. From childhood I have been taught not to express such feelings, but it is nonsense to talk thus. Give utterance to them, and you give relief to yourself, and 'tis the quickest mode of escape from their dark influence. Sometimes when stirred by such dismal emotions, I wish that to me had been given the even, easy temperament, to which joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure come alike, none of them scarce quickening the blood in the veins. But no, I should not then have my high moods, the deep joy that rises almost to ecstasy. No,—let me be happy when I am happy, even though as the price of it I must be sometimes intensely miserable. I prefer the best of the kind, and, if I must, will do with

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the smaller quantity. Admire my felicitous method of reasoning. I began this epistle in the dreariest region of cloudland, fully persuaded that the world and I were best friends apart, and, therefore, better remain so; but somehow I am rapidly tending towards this sphere again. Is it the attraction of gravitation? I have come to the conclusion that these changes of feeling are really essential, and it would be as unreasonable to ask for ourselves unclouded enjoyment, as to demand of nature perpetual sunshine, and the effect of each would be much the same.

You may attribute my gall-of-bitterness in part to a kind of worn and half-starved feeling that I have had ever since I have been here, owing to this ceaseless activity of mind and body, which is so new to me, to the change of climate just as the warm weather is coming on, and above all, to the diet. You would wonder they don't all die of dyspepsia, could you see the quantity of hot and fresh bread that is used; and every kind of meat, fish, and even vegetables seems saturated with grease, so that I have not yet tasted any thing since leaving New-York that was at all palatable. I don't wish 175 you to understand that I think there is nothing fit to eat here, for that would betray great stupidity in me. I suppose there is the same difference here as elsewhere, between rich and poor, private families and boarding-houses, and that we should find a plenty with which to tempt the appetite, could we go into a private family. But there is this fault that I find here, every thing is so much more expensive. For the same money that we pay now, we could command at the North much better accommodations—better room, better table, and a certain cleanly and fresh appearance of things, which is very desirable, and which is decidedly wanting among the middle and poorer classes here. Every thing has a dingy, untidy look. There is apparent carelessness all around, consequently carelessness in cooking. And if you wish to preserve an appetite sufficient to keep yourself alive, beware of a peep into the kitchen. Any housekeeper accustomed to having this apartment as clean and orderly as any other, would be dismayed, I'm sure, on approaching the dismal domain of the cook as one finds it here. But this hole, for it is oftentimes nothing else, is usually situated a little apart from the house, and perhaps the mistress doesn't profess to supervise it. I don't know how that

is; I only know that blackness and darkness reign there triumphant. In short, the boarding-houses that we have been in thus far, are very much like many at the North, where they would ask just about half as much per week, and consequently we should expect no better state of things. But there is little comfort, at the best, in boarding, as I believe all will allow who have had much experience, especially for persons of limited means. For such, I think the method of lodgings, which is the custom in the old countries, would be both more agreeable and comfortable, therefore I hope it will soon become general with us. Then one can have their own room or rooms, and have brought to them whatever they shall require, and at whatever time.

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Nothing in my contact with the world amuses me so much or often, as the genuine fear with which some people regard Yankees. This is not confined to Virginia, though I find it here, but it is felt as soon as one leaves the boundaries of Yankee-land, which properly, I suppose, embraces only the New-England States. Lamentable effect of shrewdness! Pity 'tis, that a class should be so smart as to inspire such extreme caution. Even an innocent young woman, like myself, is not wholly exempt from this prevailing suspicion. Whenever I approach any one, my accent, they say, betrays me at once, though I can see no difference. I discover no peculiarity in them, except in the use of some words. They have no guess-work; they always "reckon"—considered a much superior method, as, in their view, it proceeds upon data. This use of the word reckon, when I first came, struck me more forcibly than any thing else. Even the multitude of black faces that I saw on all sides, did not make me so fully conscious of the change of section as this. I approach an individual: involuntarily he seizes his purse and holds it with a firm grasp. This secured, he looks around, surveys himself much as a warrior would after putting on his armor, to see if there is any vulnerable point; then opens wide his eyes, as if he needed the full power of his vision to prevent the gold dollars being extricated from his purse and spirited away by some sorcery, before he is aware of it; and thus guarded, all his senses awake, every sentinel at his post, he meets me. I explain my business, laugh at his ideas of Yankees,

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modestly urge that he test my honesty by subscribing to some of my books, and see if he doesn't receive all I promise; and if he still persists in his opinions, I suggest that he may find the ladies more honest—that he should try them before losing all his faith. I have no idea how we gained such a reputation for being cheats. I'm certain we have too much credit. I have never observed such a pre-eminence in 1777 deception. This is an extreme case that I have described for you. It is evident this gentleman has outlived all his gallantry, but it shows you the feeling that exists, and is so often manifested in a greater or less degree.

But don't think, my friend, that the majority of persons I meet are at all like this. No. Every day I am made glad by kindness. Every day I say to myself, How much good there is in the world, if it is only appealed to—how much nobleness, and generosity, and frankness will meet you, if you are noble, generous, and frank. I have concluded that those who so much dislike the world, and so constantly berate it, are themselves perhaps somewhat to blame. You doubtless well remember the dismal, moody feelings that I used to have so frequently, and used to dignify by calling the blues. I am not so much troubled now. I sometimes fancy I have quite outgrown the disease; but occasionally I have the old symptoms, and a slight attack; but I find an active hand and busy mind an excellent panacea, which I would most heartily recommend to all the like afflicted.

### LETTER XXXII.

Petersburg, Va.

We are both here with good will, and from the same desire. Minds that are magnetically attached, follow in the main the same inclinations. We have taken a boarding-house, with an eye to the limits of our purse; yet at a price, that at the North would have insured a home almost paradisiacal, compared to this. But we will endeavor to breathe and endure for a short time. We are rare curiosities to the family, and are sharply eyed, especially by the father, who asks sundry questions, which are answered as our love of teasing

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dictates, and these answers sometimes greatly puzzle the good man. 8\* 178 We have a visitor who spends the evening with us, and will while he stays in the place. As soon as the gentleman is announced, our host seats himself in the parlor, and seems to take notes. We do our best to entertain him, and our efforts thus far have proved not unavailing. Withal, he appears rather astonished, that two young ladies should converse so glibly on all the subjects that our merry friend proposes, which are numerous, and handled in the most edifying fashion. He keeps posted up in the town's gossip, and is very much worried about a license, that it is our duty as pedlers to get. I presume he feels anxious for the honor of his house; for what a picture! two hapless young ladies carried to jail for disobeying the law! One of the daughters declares, "I'll not live an old maid;" and she has told us of one of that unfortunate class, who fell in love with one of the boarders "without any encouragement on his part." What a trespass on propriety! The Miss declares it was ridiculous, and repeats—"I'll never live an old maid;"—and she seems to put new energy into her needle, which flies so smartly at the rehearsal of each feature of the poor soul's folly, who has excited her contempt for the whole class, and her determination to avoid a like fate.

Petersburg has vastly more life, according to its size, than Richmond. There are several foundries and cotton mills, which are carried on mostly by Northerners, and besides, many are hired as manual laborers. The city furnishes numerous tobacco factories; and in one of these, the work is done entirely by the whites. I am told this is an experiment, to ascertain which is the more profitable—slave labor or white. I suppose you will quickly decide that slave labor is more so; but one must estimate the cost of the slave through the year for food and apparel, if only in common clothing. And if you want to see broadcloths, silk dresses, and white crape shawls, you should see them at 179 church, or out on holidays. Each is dressed according to his master's wealth. But the slave is heedless, wasteful, and without ambition, either from nature or position.

We have decided to spend the first day in every place in canvassing among the ladies; and if they, instead of patronizing us, tell us to go to their husbands, we will go. We did so



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here, but it availed little, and we have since called on the gentlemen with good success. I believe it is an enigma to the ladies, how we can enter foundries and tobacco factories, and every place where the laborer is, and not be coarse and bold, as, I believe, it is decided that we are not. The idea is quite shocking, I must allow, to come in contact with honest labor, and meet their brothers and husbands, who, we suppose, are good; and if they are not, we will endeavor to make them better, as this is woman's mission on the earth. But we find some excellent men, and we must conclude that they are thus in part, from having good mothers, wives, and sisters; although we are quite excluded from our sex, owing to their great refinement (?) and the delicacy of their nerves.

I find much knowledge and elevation of feeling among many of the mechanics here, more than was promised by the physiognomy of any I saw, or the few that I conversed with at Richmond. Two large iron foundries here are carried on by a wealthy man, who interests himself much in the education and progress of his workmen, either from self-interest, or love for his fellow-man, or both. But it matters not, if they receive the benefit of the act, only as he gains or loses the individual blessing that always follows the motive.

Don't imagine that we go with our faces veiled, and enter any place half frightened, and affecting a childish bashfulness, to prove that we are not bold. We act as reason dictates, as beings possessing common sense, and doing what comes from its dictations. When we find a social gentleman, 180 we talk—if nothing better offers for a seat, we sit on a barrel or box, making no apologies, and asking none. Men are rather rational beings in their theories at least.

This seclusion of woman, and sanctimonious ado about her goodness and purity, when she is kept bandboxed from the world, having few admitted to her presence, is false, and has proved itself so by the little elevating influence she has on man, and her false views of life, which bind her own liberties. I see little of the Southern ladies, but I have been told by gentlemen—and that will vouch for the truth of the statement—that most of the ladies spend their time in reading the trashy novels of the day. This is true, to a great

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extent, at the North; but duties devolve upon our young ladies that throw off in part the deadening influence. They say, also, that the young ladies here are a drug in the market; that gentlemen are received only with a view to marriage, and that after a few calls, they are expected to "define their position." I trust, however, that there are exceptions to this among the wealthier class; but it is true the world over, where woman is not self-reliant, she seeks marriage as an expected preventive of poverty, and it becomes the main object of her life; every thought, feeling, and purpose, is made subservient to this one object, and it is decided as a natural fact, that marriage is the element of woman more than man. This may be true; but what is the result of the necessity of marriage for physical support? The very obligation kills love; but still woman must wear the appearance of affection to accomplish the object. She must pretend to love, and aims, philosopher-like, to believe that she does; sacrifices herself, and exhibits all woman's tact in smiles and kindly words, when her heart is breaking from neglect and wrong. But she is dependent, and must endure. Man, too, acts on this necessity. If he has provided the physical comforts of home, it answers the marriage contract, in its motive, if not in his pretence, and the promise to love and cherish, and he feels that he can do in all else as he pleases; it is none of the wife's business. Being dependent for the necessities of life, submission to whatever may come is imposed, and expected of her. Her helplessness makes her jealous and little-minded, and she represents a being of limited benevolence, especially to her own sex, and is untrue to her own nature. The evils that arise from woman's dependence are almost as numerous as the evils that exist in society, and the world groans hourly from its curse. The only right woman needs is the right of being independent in herself—of earning her own living; no matter whether she actually accumulates a fortune or not, she must possess the capability of doing it, and feel that she is self-reliant, and that moment she is whole, all rights will follow, and all mankind will share in the blessing. Then the world will be released from the strong cry of woman's getting her rights by voting, which originated from the reason and effects of her dependence, and a want of her rights, for woman does not have her rights. She is cramped till she is little above a slave, and her whole life is a lie. But she has fettered herself—she has rejected the rights of her own position—given

her freedom to another, who, from necessity, furnishes the support, makes the conditions, and is the power. Just so long as woman yields to conservatism, thinks and acts that to labor is a shame to her, just so long she casts away her own happiness, and curses the human family with the deadliest wrong, and makes her home one scene of misery. There never existed a helpless being, but their self-respect and rights were trampled on at times. It follows, as a natural consequence, that the weak must yield to the strong. God never created a being possessed of all the powers of life, but these powers were to be used first to sustain that life, and as they are given to both sexes, the necessity devolves equally on both.

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**LETTER XXXIII.**

Petersburg, Va.

Life! Life! I thank the good God for life. Ah! 'tis a glorious boon! Man may mar the beauty of the earth, may crush his fellow-man, and as the poet sang from his own experience, from the depths of his own sad heart, make countless thousands mourn; still to all the sky, the sea, and the green glad earth remain, and Nature, like a true mother, tenderly receives her children, if they will but go to her when they are weary of the world—weary of disappointment and repulse.

To-night the breeze comes so refreshingly, after the excessive heat of the day, the stars look down upon me with such clear light, all seems so beautifully harmonious by this pure starlight, that I feel that to live, and to live truly, nobly, were an aim worthy of the gods. One seems to get a glimpse at such a time as this, of what the measure of existence would be if worthily filled up. I feel to-night fully the aspiration expressed by Margaret Fuller—"to be filled with all nobleness." And how ennobling beauty is, whether in nature or in art! How it exalts the soul! We bathe ourselves in its holy light—we eagerly drink it in, and if it does

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not find expression in any of the visible modes, in painting, poetry, or music—for these are gifts bestowed on few, yet be assured, it has its effect upon the life—it elevates that.

We hesitated long to-night, in deciding whether we would go out, which we so much wished to, or whether we would conform to the custom here, which we learn forbids ladies going out in the evening without a “protector.” Finally, feeling that we were not known—that our motives and actions could not be understood—and knowing that in our position, we could not be wholly independent of public opinion, we thought it better to forego our own wishes, and 183 remain indoors. Where was our protector, or who molested us, when we used to roam round beneath the moon, dreaming dreams, building castles, and sometimes fancying ourselves real fays in fairy land? No despotic custom ruled us then. We acknowledged no sovereign but the fair queen of night. I should think the ladies here would be wearied of being considered so much like children, who are never to go out without the nurse. There is some reason to fear going out much in a city like New-York, but in a place of this size, it seems to me simply an absurdity, that a lady cannot go whenever and wherever she pleases, with safety and propriety. I am curious to know what those unfortunates do, who have no brothers, and are also without that, it would seem, necessary appendage—a beau: I suppose they modestly stay at home. No wonder it is considered such an important event, when they gain the above-named essential. No wonder they look forward to it, and make every proper effort for it; since they then obtain so many privileges, before withheld. Really I think if one was going to remain long, they would be compensated for taking considerable trouble to enlist some cavalier in their service, merely for the convenience of having a gallant. And then, one likes to be alone sometimes; so I think the best way would be for each to arm herself, if it is necessary—if there is really so much danger—and I think those who have protectors should occasionally go out alone, as an act of benevolence, to give those the liberty who are less fortunate than themselves. The same is true in travelling. A Southern lady seldom travels alone. If she is going twenty miles, she is placed under the care of the conductor, or captain, or some friend; that is, in case her rightful protector cannot go. It is unquestionably pleasanter

to travel with an agreeable companion, than alone; but who ever gets, in this world, what is most agreeable? To have the dependent feeling, and the fear, that many have when they do go, 184 would be a greater inconvenience to me than all the annoyances I ever experienced in journeying alone. Besides, the consequence of this ridiculous custom is, that whenever ladies are seen here alone, they are subjected to a great deal of suspicion, and a great many doubtful looks, from those who do not know how prevalent the custom is at the North. One would think woman was really a child, to be taken up and carried from place to place; as if she could not retain all the guilelessness of childhood, and be a little more self-dependent. If true womanliness is of so flimsy a character as to disappear at the first contact with the world, we can scarcely regret its loss. Any thing so frail could be of little benefit to mankind. Any thing so evanescent, could not be a part of the nature. Much is said of the influence of woman at home, which is true and beautiful; but let it not be forgotten that a noble woman retains all her womanly characteristics, and has an influence wherever she may be. I find men, as a mass, more noble than women—having less prejudice, larger views, and more generosity—I mean generosity in the highest sense of the word—generosity of opinion. And why is this? Because woman shuts herself up, is entirely dependent, and is taught nothing that will expand her mind. When she learns to be guided by her own common sense, rather than the opinions of the so-called lords of creation, who prate about the beauty of submission, and the charm of dependence; when she learns to please her own ideas rather than please gentlemen, for,—from the present mode, one would think the old doctrine that man was made for God, and woman for man, was fully indorsed,—when she acts independently, whether she pleases or not, then we may expect less narrowness and contraction. It is all education. Woman has as much native greatness as man, if it is put called out, for we see that always in matters of moment, she proves herself heroic.

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You ask, why I don't tell you more about slavery? O, you genuine Yankee! No sooner do I get into Virginia, than you are quizzing me about the “peculiar institution” thereof. Is it

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possible that your appetite is still unappeased, after all the books that have been printed upon this thread-bare subject—some to please the North—some to please the South—almost all one-sided; and after such a variety of dishes, you present yourself to me, like Oliver Twist with bowl in hand, gaping mouth, and wistful look, and “please ma'am I want some more?” But I see, since you don't use your own discretion, I must use mine for you, and I promise you now that I shall only give you “more” when I think it best. I will write you what I see and hear. I can't go out of my way, and lug in a thing that needs more than any thing else, rest—yes, needs to be let alone. Whenever I meet an Uncle Tom, or a Topsy, or any other character known to fame, be assured I'll announce the fact, either by telegraph or a quicker mode, if there's any invented before that time. I see nothing wonderful, therefore, I write you nothing. What a pity some negro doesn't cut his master's throat, or some master whip his negro to death; for then, you would think you were gaining some information, and I should have a subject for a moralizing letter, and it's so much easier to preach than any thing else. We all have a gift for preaching, but the practice,—ah! the practice; that is no gift, that only comes by a “patient continuance in well doing.”

I rejoice, my dear friend, almost daily in the opportunity that this expedition gives me of ridding myself of some prejudices, some false views that I have unconsciously adopted. In the artificial society where I have been sometimes placed, there is so little thought or care for the laborer, the mechanic, and a young person is so apt to fall in with the current in such matters of opinion, that I have sometimes found myself unintentionally, and contrary to my better sense, assenting 186 to, and acting upon these superficial views. But what do I say now? I find no class more noble-hearted or more strictly honorable. I have been to-day to one of the foundries here. At first the blackness and noise within repelled me, and I was ready to retrace my steps; but my companion, who was with me, said nothing about returning, and of course I didn't like to be silly alone; so I kept myself silent, and went in; and glad am I now that I did, I found so much intelligence, kindness, and generosity. They do not often see the gentler sex in their workshop, consequently we were very welcome, which is always pleasant to us, for if one can cheer on a fellow-traveller in this life journey,

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is it not a pleasure and privilege to do it? Honor to the laborer! Honor to the man who gains his living by the sweat of his brow! for these are often of nature's noblest! The temptation of idleness, that very fruitful source of mischief and dissipation, they are spared.

### LETTER XXXIV.

Petersburg, Va.

We have been absent from Petersburg several weeks, and returned to-day to deliver our books; but upon getting here, we find they are not half here—one of our publishers, the Harpers, with their fair words and smooth faces, having refused to do as they agreed; and after we have toiled to get subscribers for their books, they refuse to send them without the money in advance, as they contracted, and as other publishers do. They have shown themselves about as large-souled as their faces indicate. One of the whining hypocrites, when we called upon them, after thinking and thinking, and talking and talking, and trying to decide whether he should or not trust us with ten dollars' worth of books, 187 which we wanted merely as samples (which we *could* have paid for) with which to get subscribers, spoke in this wise: “Now, Sarah (he was so very affectionate and fatherly, that he had learned my companion's Christian name, and addressed her accordingly)—now, Sarah, you know I should not mind the loss of the ten dollars; but it is the loss of trust and confidence in men, if you should fail to pay. If I should leave a sixpence on my desk, and you should take it—why, it is not so much the loss of the sixpence, but so much trust in man gone” (i. e., sixpence worth)! Thus he made morality easy to our juvenile understandings. One of the others said to me: “I am glad young ladies are engaging in this business, for I have daughters of my own; and who knows but they may some time be compelled to do this, or something else.” God grant, if they do, they may have more manly men to deal with than their father and uncles have proved. His greatest joy that young ladies were engaging in this was, doubtless, the hope that they should sell a few more books by the means; and as we have chanced to get more subscribers for another publisher, they probably think it no object to oblige us, since we do not work exclusively

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for them, doing which we might soon starve, so small is the discount they make. I find all booksellers regard them much in the same light, but they are obliged to sell their books, because they publish so extensively, and books that are in demand. No wonder they grow rich, and thereby powerful, since they are so small and mean. And yet this is the man whom the citizens of New-York made their Mayor—Major, Major-Domo;—one of their great men!

So that, as it has turned out, the loss of trust and confidence is on our side, and not on the side of the brothers Harper—the generous trust we are so full of when we launch our bark upon the broad sea of life, but which we are often compelled to give up little by little, till at last we come jealously 188 to guard what remains, and at every new acquaintance tremble, lest we are to be again deceived. But blessings on that good old maxim, “All's for the best.” It is a mantle of consolation that all may don when woes are showering upon them. People have sighed for a Lethe, that they might drink of its waters and forget; but what is Lethe—what is utter forgetfulness—to having a remembrance of your sorrows, but so softened by this consoling mantle, that they no longer seem afflictions, but rather blessings. Such meanness has the same effect as discord in music—we appreciate more highly the generous and noble that succeeds it.

I am aware that this mention of the Messrs. Harper is not exactly after the manner of Mrs. Maury, Lady Emiline Wortley and Miss Bremer, whose references to persons are all rose-colored, and with a sentimental glow of confidence about them which is never misplaced or broken. But their relations with those whom they met were always of a holiday character. They saw people on their best behavior and in their best clothes; and, more than all, they had no business transactions with them, which exhibit the characters of men more than any quantity of summering and wintering with them. But we see men in their homespun and everyday wear, and in their true characters, as displayed in the ordinary relations of life. And seen from this point of view, my dear M—, this is one of the pictures I have to present to you.



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As we are obliged to wait for our books for two or three days, we have nothing to do but observe the life that goes on around us—the life in the hotel where we are now stopping, as a change from the more quiet boarding-house.

“O wad some power the giftie gie us, To see oursels as ithers see us.”

So said Scotia's bard, and so said I, mentally, as I sat this 189 morning silent spectator of the ceremony of morning calls. I was in the parlor, and attempting to read; but how could one read, when there was such a “feast of reason?” Of all mock affairs that I know of, there are none so clever as these mock feasts, where nothings are served up so elegantly. The ladies said so many civil things to each other; but to find any heartiness in their words, I would defy one. Not that the young bride who received these calls is peculiar in this; no, she is only a good example of a large class of American women, who, I am absolutely afraid, will soon become totally extinct, they are so rapidly refining away. Such lisping and affectation! Why! some of our ladies hardly dare speak above their breath, lest they shall be called masculine! But it is really painful to see how little naturalness there is—how little free out-speaking of whatever is in the mind and heart. Every thing is done by fixed rules. Every thing is false and inane. They seem to have about as much idea of the earnestness of life as other parrots. This sickly pseudo-refinement is the peculiar characteristic of American women. We do not see it among the English; they have more simplicity—more opinions of their own, and more reliance upon these opinions; and though this is owing very much to their mental training, it is also, I think, partially due to their frequent and long exercise in the open air; for there is no doubt this gives a freshness and vigor of mind that nothing else can, and prevents that sickly, passive state, that our hot-house plants, live in. They may well be called hot-house plants, for they are as superficial and as short-lived. Now that I have be-become somewhat accustomed to the climate, and to the excitement of mind that so wore me at first, I am in better health than ever before, merely because I live more in the sunshine and the breeze. My own experience being so happy in this, it seems to me sometimes, that I must persuade 190 every woman I meet to go out more,

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it so renovates one, and gives such a clear, healthy tone to the mind, by invigorating the body. And if this habit would become more general, it would be one step toward abolishing the absurd effeminacy which is becoming so enteeel.

We are regarded with much curiosity here. One of the “ladies,” indeed, displayed such an uncommon interest in us, that we found her listening at our door. She is the Paul Pry of the establishment, I suppose; but whether she pries for her own private pleasure, or for the benefit of the community of the house, I am at a loss to decide. I only hope she heard enough to pay her for the time spent at our door. I felt inclined to ask her, if she wouldn't like to engage in some more useful occupation. Any interest in me, however manifested, usually pleases; but I must confess I do not quite like to have it take this form. I have more than once stoutly denied the oft-repeated assertion, that curiosity is a prominent and peculiar characteristic of our sex; and thus to be met by so stubborn a fact, took me quite aback, and put at fault all my philosophy. For the sake of my view of the question, it is a pity she had not gone away before I opened the door.

My companion goes on the common-sense plan of wearing her frock a sensible length; but, alas for the poor frock! If it is endowed with any sensibility, I'm sure it shrunk full two inches, at least, to-day, under the scrutinizing gaze of one of the fine ladies here. We were just coming in from a walk, when our attention was attracted by the rude stare aimed at us, accompanied by a very complacent smirk, and upon thinking what had provoked it, we discovered that it was the somewhat short dress of my friend. The “lady” who so much enjoyed our ignorance of fashion, has never, I fear, been thoroughly educated; for it is plain she has never been taught that wise old saw, “cut your coat according to 191 your cloth”—having evidently put all her cloth into the skirt of her frock, which was excessively abundant, both in length and breadth, and had none left for the waist, that was really scanty; especially in height, it was fearfully deficient!

Our *femme de chambre* here is the prettiest black girl I have seen. I should like to take her home with me, but she says her Missus wouldn't part with her. She appeared Sunday in

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three different frocks. First in a common calico, next in a black silk, which she told us was a present from her husband, and in the evening she came sailing in with a white muslin. They were all equally becoming, and made with a good deal of taste. She was greatly amused at my compliments on her fine appearance, especially as I told her I hadn't a silk dress in the world. One likes to see the negroes dress, they seem to enjoy it so much; and she is so cheerful and pleasant, that she is a ray of sunshine, if she is black. Two great attractions of the negro character, are their affectionateness and good nature. Sorrow sits lightly upon them. Dick, one of the clever waiters, has taken quite a fancy to my friend. He serves her with great pleasure. He even brings her beautiful flowers—another proof of how much force there is in example. Even the servants are gallant here.

### LETTER XXXV.

Petersburg, Va.

We have been visiting to-day. We spent the whole day out. "Indeed," methinks you say, "is it not the first time since you went South?" Yes, it is the first time. The invitation came before we were up this morning. It was so cordial, and we were at leisure, that we accepted it. 'Twas from a good lady that you will recognize when I tell you 192 her name, for she has a world-wide reputation for hospitality; and what is so charming, because unusual, is, that there is no distinction of wealth or position among her guests. She welcomes all to her presence. She invites all, indeed, but many never heed her invitation, never go to see her. They pronounce the dear old lady wretched company—so dull and prosy. But these were not allowed to go to her in childhood, and, therefore, never learned to love her. They don't know how joyous she is. They don't know what a marvellous faculty she has for pleasing every one who visits her—how she sympathizes with all, be they glad or sad. This paragon is old in years, but she renews her youth from time to time, so that she always retains its charms in perfection. She has had many admirers, but she lives singly, dispensing her favor and hospitality alike to all. She loves all, but many she regards as her children—children by adoption, because they love her so much, and have lived

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so much with her. This matron, so regal, yet so simple, is known as Dame Nature. The messenger she sent to invite us was a sunbeam, that stole into our window at early morn, and coaxed us with such loving warmth to go forth, that we, could not resist.

We left the city far behind us, and continued our walk for some distance, till, coming to a pleasant grove, the laughing sprites surrounded me, and fairly bore me away into their pleasantest dell, before I knew whither I was going. My companion had an errand farther on, so, by promising to return, they let her proceed. When I was once in their midst, really captured, I was allowed to roam wherever I pleased, for they knew full well that the music of their sylvan deities would keep me in willing durance. Many melodious voices invited my near approach. A brook went singing on its way, making glad music; the zephyrs playing with the green leaves above and around me, formed a gentle accompaniment, 193 while ever and anon the nymphs of the broad river lying beneath me, joined a sweet but somewhat mournful chorus, all making perfect harmony.

For some time I wandered dreamily round, pouring from my own spirit a song of thanksgiving. Presently I heard a low murmuring melody, and looking down at my side, I looked into the clear eyes of a spring, sending its limpid waters up to the light in graceful bubbles, and seeming to invite me to pause. The low song chained me, and I sat me down, listening, and musing on the lot of mortals. I thought of ambition, and then I spoke: "Tell me, gentle spring, dost never wish thou wert a broad river, that all would know of thee—that thy banks might be adorned with fruitful meadows—that thou mightest bear noble vessels on thy bosom—vessels loaded with wealth, for which mankind would bless thee? Who knows thee now? Who finds thee, and tastes thy pure water? What avails thy existence here, so obscure?" Mildly the spring answered: "Grand and useful is the flowing river; proudly it bears rich burdens on its tide, and many bless it, but not all—not all. Do not the rough winds lash it into fury, and in its wrath it destroys that of which it was before so proud? The mother shudders at a glimpse of it, for lost in its depths was her noble boy—the pride of her heart. The merchant frowns as he approaches it, for he is reminded of the richly laden ships its waves engulfed; and the husbandman looks gloomy and

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disheartened, as he surveys his lately fair fields of grain laid waste and destroyed by its overflowing waters. Therefore, many bless it, but not all. It does not inspire all with joy. I, maiden, am happier as I am. None know me now but to bless me. The thirsty traveller finds me, is refreshed by cool water, and goes joyfully on his way. No angry winds disturb me. None, sorrowing, ask me to give up their lost ones. Perpetually fresh and fair are my 9 194 soft, mossy banks; and mortals come to me daily, to whom I dispense my sparkling bounty, and they, in return, shower blessings upon me. Am I useless, because the great world knows not and notes not my existence? If I am not strong to aid, neither am I mighty to destroy. And thou, even thou, maiden,—hast thou not been soothed and gladdened by my simple music? Art not thou a little happier for my presence?” Rebuked by these simple words, I kept silence. Long I sat thus, till my attention was aroused by footsteps. Looking up, I saw something. 'Twas neither “a nymph, a naiad, or a grace.” No; 'twas a brownie—a real brownie, I thought. She filled her pitcher, gave me to drink, and quietly departed. I returned to my meditations, but very soon the brownie returned, with a request that I would follow her. Silently she led the way; wonderingly I followed. She entered a house near by; and now that I was out of the witched limits of the grove, and the spell of the wood and water nymphs was removed, I discovered that my conductor was no brownie of established fame, but a simple Ethiopian, who had come for water, and had reported to her mistress what she had seen; and that lady, wishing to engage some one in her family as a kind of companion for herself, and overseer, in short, one who would make herself “generally useful,” in any and every way, had sent for me, to see if I was a person possessing sufficient versatility to answer her purpose, and if she could secure my services. I politely told her I was already occupied; and my companion then returning, I met her, and together we re-entered the wood, and laughed, and sang, and danced, no doubt somewhat to the surprise and admiration of the spirits of the grove. All the new and beautiful thoughts that Dame Nature whispered to us, all the innocent gossips of her various handmaidens, I cannot relate.

As the shadows of evening deepened around, we returned 195 to the city, freighted with loving and kindly emotions, bestowed on us by our bounteous entertainer.

**LETTER XXXVI.**

Petersburg, Va.

My dear friend, you say you were disappointed in my last letter, and that you thought when you commenced, that you were to have a domestic picture—that I had really been in some private family, and you should hear how it seemed to me what the peculiarities of Southern domestic life are; and instead of that, I merely spent the day with Nature, whom every body knows, and nobody cares to hear about. Be careful how you speak of my noble mother, or in my wrath I shall invoke all the wicked spirits of air, earth, and sea, to disturb your thoughts by day and dreams by night, till they have taught you that you cannot with impunity speak slightly of our great benefactor. I have nothing to say of Southern hospitality. I have experienced none—I have seen none. I have found hospitality every where thus far to consist pretty much in the name, and I am inclined to think it is so here, though there are two good reasons why we have had none extended to us. In the first place, there is little to be found in cities any where, either North or South. It is a virtue rarely found where the population is dense, and it seems to me when we do find it, it is dispensed much as gifts are. Those who will be likely to return as much or more as they receive, are usually highly favored, but with the other class this is not the case; seeming to prove that “to him that hath shall be given.” People seem to have forgotten what is said about entertaining strangers, or if they still remember it, who would ever think that an angel would come in the guise of a book agent? In this age of skepticism the 196 wings would have to be visible to convince one of their presence. I think it strange that some ambitious inventor don't persist in his work till he has manufactured a pair of wings. Several have made the attempt. So long ago as the youth of the last generation, in that low state of progress—for you know we have advanced marvellously since then—I have heard of a man in Boston who advertised that he had provided himself with wings, and at such an

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hour would fly from the steeple of the Old South Church. A great crowd assembled to witness the feat. But something happened; he didn't succeed, and years have passed, leaving us still without wings, and leaving a great chance for some one to immortalize himself by inventing them. But as my companion and myself have no wings to prove that we are angels, and as the public show a lamentable want of faith in our being angels in disguise, we have had no hospitality urged upon us.

To-day I have been delivering some of my books. Hitherto I have only taken subscribers, and knew nothing of the perplexities involved in the last part of the business. The only pleasure that compensates for the increased labor in carrying the books to our various subscribers, is in receiving the money, and feeling that we have finished; and in some cases we experience the same as in meeting a friend again, for in all places there are many who, for some kindness, are entered upon our list of friends. I have considered myself fairly established in my new position—quite at home, indeed; but this morning, as I went forth with quite a huge box of books in my arms, as many as I found it convenient to carry, I must confess to you, I felt so awkward that at the moment I decided—you know I usually decide hastily—that I would never be a book-agent again. As I emerged into the street, I seemed to be rendered so conspicuous by my burden, that I almost turned my steps back, with a determination to escape by some means. But no mode of escape presented itself, and I was about concluding that I was a most unfortunate young woman, when Common Sense came to my rescue. She said: “What if people do stare at you! Don't they stare at every thing a little new? Depend upon it, a hat or frock made in a new style would excite far more attention than you will. And how much does the world care for you or any body else? Just enough to give you a look, and that sometimes vacant, and without thought; or perhaps make a remark, which they never remember, but which, if you are determined to be foolish, you can make yourself unhappy about for some time. You are not of so much importance that people will think of you at all five minutes after you are gone.” Thus spake my sage Mentor; so if Minerva doesn't condescend to take form and become my companion, and guide me, as in olden time she did the son



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of the wise Ulysses, I think I am just as well provided for. To be sure, most young ladies consider Common Sense very prim, plain, and unpoetical—those who have studied French pronounce her “outré,” and almost all agree that she hasn't attractions enough to make her an object, and it's true she never flatters one's vanity; but she helped me out of my dilemma, so I shall pay her my allegiance, however unpopular she may be with others. After this lesson from my Mentor, which was about as gratifying to my vanity as some of those given by Telemachus's counsellor were to his, I went on my way without hesitation. I had excellent success. With one or two exceptions, all were at home, ready for their books, satisfied with them, and prompt in paying for them—all which is very agreeable. It gives one such a feeling of satisfaction to have their affairs go on smoothly. But I don't feel very rich, even when I look at the money I have received to-day, which is quite a sum; for the fact that the larger part of it belongs to the publishers is never forgotten, and I say to myself, that when they are paid, I shall have 198 very little; so that, if there is to be any disappointment, it shall be in finding that I have more than I expected. This is a way we have of cheating ourselves. We talk of being deceived by others, but I think we cheat ourselves better than any one else. What is there that we do not make ourselves believe, if we wish to? To be sure, we have the true idea all the time in a little corner of the mind, but we take good care to conceal and silence it, until some one else presents the same thought; and before we are aware of it, our own, which we have been so cautiously keeping back, starts up, meets, and responds to it. But what matters it if I do not make a fortune? I am at present in that quiescent state when one says with so much complacency, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” I suppose it is the same of the good thereof. I am enjoying myself very well, doing what good I can in my way, and what more does any one do? Some take one subject, which they harp on with untiring zeal, and by their conversation they lead you to think they are martyrs, or would be, if the opportunity offered; they talk of their uncompromising spirit—how they stand for truth even to the death, till you think they should be canonized at once, and receive the martyr's crown. But you know them a little longer, and you see that their action is very feeble, or that they have none at all. Their strength lies in words, which, without deeds, are a disgusting mockery.



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Where now is your enthusiasm for the new-found hero? You are ashamed of having experienced any, and resolv# in future to heed nothing but acts. But I was speaking of a fortune. It must be a plague to be rich; one worries so much lest this and that fail, and they be left poor. Then, too, it's especially annoying to a young lady, if they all think as I do, for I always thought I should never dare to marry, lest it should prove that the fortune was the chief attraction. And if, on the other hand, one dooms herself to a state of celibacy, she 199 is overwhelmed by kindness from the brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, who have all the time the fortune in perspective. Therefore, I think the wisest way is to go on in my present mode, and not trouble myself to make a fortune, which I have proved, satisfactorily to myself, at least, would only bring more trouble.

We had the closing scene to-day with a young petti-fogger, whom we met when we were here before. He took considerable pains to subscribe for books from both of us, and was so excessively gallant, that I expected, when next I heard of him, to learn that he had started on a Quixotic expedition, for the purpose of redressing the wrongs of ladies fair. But, alas for poor human nature! This valiant knight, appearing in his true colors, is a dapper fopling; his greatest value consisting, not in himself, but in the cloth he wears. We carried his books several days ago, and have never been able to see him but once, until to-day. Once my friend saw him, and he told her he had just sent the amount of the books to her by a friend, which was entirely false; and to-day, when we met him, he was so thoroughly uncomfortable, and in such a hurry to get away, as he said, again and again, "go and take your books," that I could only enjoy his uneasiness, leaving my friend to talk, who finally told him, if he was so poor that he couldn't pay, that we would go and take them, which we did; some of our friends saying, we might consider ourselves fortunate in getting the books again. Any thing is tolerable in a person but a want of truth—want of honor. We can overlook and pardon a thousand faults of temper, manner, and opinion, if there is true principle,—if there is some character as a basis. But if truth is lacking, all the rest is of no avail, for it is without foundation.

**LETTER XXXVII.**

Petersburg, Va.

We have been from here awhile, but have returned, for the purpose of distributing books. Life never runs smoothly in all its changes, and I am glad it don't. We want a thunder-storm occasionally, in the business world, as well as among the elements. We weary of sunshine and fair scenery, and welcome the thunder-storm, even if it makes us tremble, grow pallid, and review the past with a prayerful heart. We enjoy the smooth and the rugged—we like the contrast. When we arrived here, we found only a part of our books. One of the most extensive publishers, after many fair words and promises, and after our giving them all the security they wished, have concluded they “don't know” about letting us have books, until they are more sure of the reliability of the indorser. We have spent time, money, and labor in taking orders for their books, and now have come to distribute them, when we receive the conclusion of the whole matter—“don't know.” My partner has given the report of our indignation at such meanness, but I will save the shot until I get within sight of the game, as I never like to waste my ammunition; but I may in this case, in aiming at their mouse-shaped heads and soulless bodies.

But in the two principal publishers that were to furnish us books, we have the contrast of honest and dishonest men. I wonder if all the world have seen the picture of the good and bad man! Striking are the shades that mark their character. Often in this crowded and tumultuous world, we lose sight of the contrast, and exclaim, People are about alike, after all!—rather bad—rather a mean race on this earth—none to be trusted! But I'll never say it again; and, when circumstances would make me utter such a wrong, I will recall the good men, as presented in the other publishers, 201 who have trusted us without security, and now, for the expediency of our business, they have credited us to the amount of several hundred dollars, and in all their dealings are so frank and true. We can best express our gratitude in the exclamation—how good, how noble they are! An upright man is second to God, and I will yield him next my adoration. To trust fully is glorious; and the dependent

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comprehend its whole meaning, to know you are not obliged to watch with jealous care the freaks and breaks that are attendant on the weak and corrupt, but to rely as confidentially on another as yourself. But to have labored months, spent time and money, and, when perhaps others are dependent on the result of these labors, and then have all dashed to naught, by the fickleness and meanness of them that hold the power. I abominate dependence, only on the good, and then the position wears a natural tie—a joining link in the brotherhood.

At our return here, as we were to stay but a few days, we have taken board at one of the first hotels, hoping thereby to have a respite from untidiness, disorder, and unwholesome food; but with all its elegance and its richly furnished table, it bears a resemblance to the boarding-houses,—the whole wants in a genuine cleanliness and order. Cleanliness must be the foundation of all else in the domestic arrangement; and it is the duty of every housekeeper to attend, first, to personal cleanliness; secondly, the kitchen; and, thirdly, the general cleanliness. Then the basis is laid for social happiness and social good. Harmony of feeling, and a well-regulated mind, never existed with disorder and filth. One might as well attempt to grow large trees in a hot-house.

The Southerners pride themselves on their gallantry—make it a point of importance, and contrast themselves with our Northerners, who are thought to be greatly deficient in 9\* 202 comparison, which I must allow that they are, in the full meaning of the word; but the lack is made up, in every shade of its definition, by the Southerner. It strikes me as a polite manner of supplanting one's natural rights, and giving falsehood and flattery in their stead—an exchange I feebly appreciate and acknowledge. We had a trifling specimen of it this evening, as we were leaving the dining-room. At the door we met some half dozen—gentlemen I suppose they were!—and if they were not, all the sex try to behave like gentlemen, in broad daylight and before the public; but our good host, with a most graceful bow and extended arms, stepped between us and them, exclaiming, “Ladies, let me protect you.” I felt my face crimson, from what appeared to me to be disrespect, and an insult to the well-behaved gentlemen, who fell back, at our first approach, to let us pass.

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Involuntarily I replied, "We need no protection," which shocked their gallant taste, and disturbed the good feelings of our protector, who is at heart one of the best men I ever met with. We have much for which to thank him, in the interest and tender care manifest for us. It is most reviving, in our pilgrimage, to meet such spirits, which we do occasionally among the stronger sex. But why do we not find more among women? They are as generous in smiles to the gentlemen as we are, but smiles and pleasant words are sparingly dealt out to their own sex. I believe it all false, all unnatural—a disarrangement of the affections; for nothing warms and cheers my heart so much as the smiles and intellectual conversation of a generous woman, and I long for more of the society of my own sex. I am wearied of the gentlemen's gallantry; for but few receive us like good fathers in their conversation, however aged they may be;—so much heartless talk about nothing.

Most of the ladies here appear like bandbox things, and chat more like magpies than sensible beings—just-such as we find every where in so-called high life. The dear things are very handsome, and exhibit their beauty in every possible manner. I should think they would be dreadfully afraid of getting tanned, in their almost sleeveless, and shockingly low-necked dresses. A young professional sprout of the city has just returned here with his young bride. I "guess" she is going to be one of that kind of wives that nearly all men desire, and talk of getting—that smile always—never cry, only about a new dress, or staying away from some party, and then the husbands like to see them cry, and so they ought—and then it is all made up so beautifully. But they smile at every thing else—smile, whether the husband is in a fit of ill-humor, from some ups and downs in his business, comes home and vents his spite on his family, as he is secure there from being knocked down, or whether, propped up in a big chair, he sips a cup of coffee—the wife smiles. I should think a smiling marble statue of a woman would answer quite as well, and it would be as akin to nature as an ever smiling being, and vastly more agreeable. I am sure this little bride will bless her dear partner always with smiles, for she has such a prim mouth. It is fixed so pretty all the time, and when she talks, the words come out so mincingly that one can scarcely understand. But who cares so long as she wears such pretty smiles, and

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her lips are kept so half pouting, which gives such a charm. I “reckon” she has received a compliment some time, about her lips and smiles, she appears so conscious of their possession. She wears a different frock almost every day, down to dinner, which makes me wonder how she can smile, for I have but two, and I can't smile all the time from the very trouble I have in taking care of them.

The more I see of the negroes and their position here, I am decided that they are better and happier than we should make them, with our spirit and theirs brought in contact. 204 We should treat their careless, blundering ways with little patience and forbearance; for we must decide, from their whole organism, that it is as much or more nature, than from their education. In the present relation, I believe the whites are cursed more than the blacks. Manual labor is depreciated when done by a class of menials, and its nobility can never rise or be understood, when carried on by undisciplined minds, that know but little, and care less, of the order and arrangement, the cause and effect, of natural combinations, and the whole result is hap-hazard—which proves little in favor of its having been done rightly, as the most minute act in every thing is governed by fixed laws. A few minds may perceive the worth of labor—its God-given stamp—but the masses regard it as servile, and for menials, and menials for it. To be obligated ourselves to act, leads us to a thousand precious truths. I like the nature of the blacks—they are so kind and jolly, and their affable ways have a fine finish. A kind Dick here, who serves us most at the table, is really a favorite of mine. He is so gallant in his attentions—no, I won't abuse him with the word—but so courteous, that he quite charms me. Somehow my handkerchief falls very often when I am getting up from the table—I suppose from bashfulness—and Dick picks it up, bowing so gracefully, to which I return my prettiest “kurche” and a thank you—he is pleased, and so am I. I have received several bouquets, through the chambermaid, from the good Dick, and afterwards he asked me if they “smelt pretty,” which of course they do when given by a kind heart. The first and head slave of this establishment, is most a noble negro; he feels and presents in all his bearing, the man. If he had his liberty he would make himself worthier of it than many that wear a whiter skin. I see he feels and hungers

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for knowledge—freedom of mind as well as body—which the masses of slaves do not feel or care for. I ask, 205 when an opportunity offers, if they would like to be free. The answer is usually in the negative.

Don't decide that I take this as conclusive that they should not have their freedom. But I conclude that they are best off as they are, unless a territory could be given them as an asylum, and good missionaries sent to aid and educate them; and carry on the work that is already begun, of enlightening them; although it is thought with us, to be carried on in the retrograde movement here. But I would suggest that the missionaries be chosen from the South to teach them, for I am confident that they would perform the work better and quicker, with more patience, endurance and love. I conceive it a difficult matter to force discipline of character, before nature's own time and course; and to wait nature's operations, joined with the best positions and conditions that could be given them, needs strong and patient souls to aid in the work. I fear some of our flashy abolitionists would scarcely endure to the end, if put to the practice of their views, which sound so beautifully in speeches. There is wrong here, and wrong every where, where individual power is felt—and there must be suffering, just in proportion to the unlimited power that is licensed either by position or circumstances. Whether that power is produced by money, or by the law that licenses the possession of human bodies, the result is quite the same to the subject—the slave. I doubt not that the North could discover some terrible abuse of moneyed power, if they should open their eyes and seek their own faults; but the wrong and suffering of each are no excuse—neither cancels the other. But what is to be done? Can the power of money be made to lose its hold? Can each individual be taught that it is his duty to strive for a part—a share—and thereby destroy the power of the few of large possessions, which always results in the oppression of the masses? The same view may be taken of all slavery, 206 and the result is, the degradation of a portion of the human family. I can see nothing but to work on—each acting from a rational development of their own judgment, and with a pure conscience, each cut, clear, burn, and prepare their own woodland for the harvest of good; and if our Northern climate ripens the crops earlier than the Southern sun

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does, why, it will be pronounced a miracle; and our Southern neighbors will send for us to aid them, and teach them the secret of such prematureness—for we seldom stand back and refuse a blessing—and all must be drawn into the vortex of good.

We have been at Richmond distributing books. At my old boarding-house I met the black Aunt Jenny, who caught me in her arms, and almost smothered me with kisses. I was never kissed so fervently since my babyhood, I'm sure, and she screamed, "Miss Sarah has come!" Don't you think I love the good creature, with her ebony face? Jenny was very delicately reared in her master's family, but her mistress being dead, is now hired out as chambermaid. I was going to say something of Richmond, but the very thought of it makes me feel sad. I shall never like the city, though many of the people I esteem highly; but its joylessness makes me sad—nothing about it lifegiving and spontaneous, and I was homesick when first there. But we are again at Petersburg, finishing our labors, that we may be off to Norfolk. We are full of spirit and joy; we chat and laugh when we are together, and life goes on merrily. We occasionally conclude that we must be very good, that we are blessed so exceedingly. One says, "How good we are!" and the other assents to it; consequently in moods when we are not so good one cannot accuse the other of egotism without involving one's self. Thus you see we are fine philosophers! Sometimes our business permits us to go together, and on our way to-day we found a little girl with her gourd at a spring, playing 207 with its water. By asking her to drink, we set her into a grin, and her mouth stretched nearly from ear to ear, showing her ivory, as she handed us her tiny gourd goblet filled and dripping with water. Thanking the little black chit, set her into a broader grin, which ended in a laugh as we bounded down the hill. At this, my companion felt it her duty to lecture ourselves on propriety, which she did eloquently, and to prove its truth and importance, cited many of the fashions and changes since the deluge, that have been received under the dignified name of propriety. The whole sermon was very conclusive, and as we pronounced amen, and parted, each walked off with a statelier air. It is not only effectual, but charming to hear my companion sermonize. I never fall asleep or get wearied. And indeed, she is all the preacher I hear of late, as we have



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no Sunday bonnet, and can't go to meeting. But I am perfectly satisfied with my preacher, and at the close of every sermon respond amen with fervency of feeling. Besides, we are not annoyed by unpunctual people coming in after the services have commenced, or dashing girls that whew in and attract the attention of the whole congregation, and seem to be there to show their finery. My preacher speaks so praisingly of the choir, and the fine voice of the leader, which makes the chorister sing better, if the eye does glance down quickly and the cheek warm a little when the commendations are bestowed. Her text is as often found in living nature as in the Book, and I don't mind it if she don't stick to it, as the sermon is of itself a bundle of texts.

There are such precocious lawyers and editors South, I doubt if the North ever produced the like prodigies, for as such these may be regarded, considering the few years they have existed. A number in the city seem just to have been released from the nursery and the period of long clothes. But adieu: my mate has returned from her day's labor; and when together, we devote ourselves to some mutual enjoyment, 208 reading, talking, and laughing, of course, at the pleasant or droll pictures we witness during the day; for my companion has charming powers of embellishment, especially in the happy application she makes of the scene. I am seldom expected to relate my adventures, because my abstract nature gets me lodged on the ands, and the story is spoiled.

### **LETTER XXXVIII.**

Norfolk, Va.

Yesterday morning we took leave of Petersburg. In our position we have very little individual leave-taking, which is very agreeable to me; for I have never yet, after considerable practice, acquired ease in that ceremony. I think it awkward and unpleasant always; for, if they are dear friends, it is painful, and if only common acquaintances, it is a useless form. But whoever they are that I am leaving, I get through with the adieu so awkwardly, that it suits me best to throw one laughing, careless good-bye to them all, and



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run, before those who have any feeling can exhibit it, and before those who haven't, can have time to get up any in honor of my departure. For some act on the same principle, when one leaves, that they do when one dies. As soon as the dust has returned to dust, all the faults of the person are immediately transformed into virtues; so, when one leaves, they feel in duty bound to display some grief, even though they have been wishing this departure for a long time. But they don't mean to deceive, nor do they; for you soon learn that it is a habit—a civility that they offer, and which you, as a courtesy, accept; and it is precisely because I am not perfectly *au fait* in civilities and courtesies of this sort, that I have to escape them by making one rapid bound, which places me beyond the sound, and, therefore, the necessity of 209 answering them. But, as I said before, we are not often troubled by any thing of the kind. This time we only said good bye to the proprietor, who had treated us with great kindness, and to the clever Dick, with his black face radiant with honesty and goodness, and took our seats in the cars. We had only to ride a few miles—just far enough to satisfy our inclination for talking, rehearsing whatever had been of importance in Petersburg, and speculating upon what we should find at Norfolk, and were ready for quiet by the time we reached City Point, where we were transferred from the cars to the steamboat. It is singular how poorly our knowledge of geography serves us, when we come to travel. I have heard and talked to pupils of the James River, and the towns on and near its banks a thousand times; and still, as we moved gently away from City Point, I inquired what river we were on, and even after being told, did not fully realize where I was, the stream is so much broader and larger than I expected, till we passed the ruins of Jamestown. The remains of the old town form so small a part of the landscape, that I could hardly associate them in my mind with the idea of ruin, and every thing about was so fresh and luxuriant; still, as I caught a glimpse of the walls of the old church, overgrown and almost concealed by green shrubbery, and allowed fancy to fill up, and people the fair scene, I made it seem somewhat poetical. But ruins, to inspire any deep emotion, must either be grand in their own strength and beauty, or must have been the cradle and home of genius. If godlike genius has been nourished and fostered beneath their walls, no matter how lowly they may be, they are at once crowned with

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a halo of glory, and we make pilgrimages to them, and look upon them with a kind of religious enthusiasm. But at Jamestown there is only the remnant of a church, of which you may say,—it was, and is no more! and with the same feeling that you would have for any thing else passing away. There is always a degree of melancholy attached to decay, whenever and wherever seen.

The James is a fine river; but there is a muddy appearance of the water that I have never seen elsewhere, and which mars its beauty. Beautiful fresh fields and shady groves lie stretched along its banks, with here and there the charming abode of some nabob planter. Much of the scenery is very pretty; but I, true to the taste acquired in my childhood's home, the Green Mountain State, like something more wild and mountainous. Still the scenery was just in keeping with the atmosphere, and with my mood, quiet and dreamy. Only one view especially pleased me; one was so picturesque, that I have it still. We were stopping to receive some passengers, who were coming to us in a little boat from the shore near by. A rich strip of woodland extended down almost to the water's edge, but finally terminated in a smooth green slope, whereon stood, midway between the water and the wood, a little black girl, seemingly half grown to womanhood. There was no dwelling in sight, no other mortal visible on the shore. She stood in the simplest attitude, motionless as a statue, alone in the green solitude, the darkness of her form relieved by the brighter background of the wood. As I viewed the picture, imagination bore me back to the time when the white man first intruded himself on the broad domains of the native possessor of the soil. I pictured the consternation of the untaught Indian, when, for the first time, he saw a vessel moving slowly up this very river. How it must have startled him, seeming a thing of life. And my little image on the shore opposite, was not she, in reality, a young Indian girl, who had been petrified with amazement, as the sailing wonder first burst on her sight, and now stood, solitary monument of a race well nigh extinct? Yes, it must be so; she must be as lifeless as she seemed; and, with an emotion of sympathy for her unfortunate fate, I turned to take a last look, as we moved on down the river, when, lo! my statue had suddenly warmed into life, and was gliding into the neighboring wood. So my imaginings

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were vain—my Indian was an African, and I was on no exploring expedition, but simply on board a modern steamboat bound for Norfolk.

Wearied with thinking, chatting, and reading, we commenced singing. Monstrous bold, wasn't it, for two young women alone to be singing in so public a place? I am almost astonished myself now, especially as my voice is by no means charming; but, at the time, it seemed very natural, so I did it. Nothing is so pleasant, when you are in the world, as to rid yourself occasionally of the idea that every body is looking at you, and that you must sit up straight, and behave yourself. Usually we are like children in presence of a stately grandmother, unnaturally prim and proper. Our grandmother is society, and she watches us through the spectacles of conservatism, with eagle eyes, and while we are comparative strangers, we are rather awed by her scrutiny, and comport ourselves with what she calls commendable decorum; but by degrees we, weary of the restraint, grow restless and unruly, and, finally, go where we please, and do what we please, despite the frowns and admonitions of our worthy grandam.

The other ladies kept themselves, with praiseworthy propriety, mewed up in the close air inside—the most of them, at least all who had no “protectors,” in the innermost sanctuary, separated by a curtain from the common saloon. I should not be surprised if the eastern mode of being always veiled, should ere long be passed over to us by our foreign fashion-makers, and I am not sure that it would not be an improvement, for, veiled, I suppose we could go where we pleased. I should only stipulate that the material be such as to admit the air freely.

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The two most important persons on board, excepting, of course, myself and companion, were a bachelor and widower, who borrowed their importance from their high mission, both being in search of a wife. The bachelor was somewhat out of date, but seemed to have good courage still, though my friend gravely advised him to give up his project, being convinced that he had no heart, and no sensible person would take him heartless.

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But he was not to be discouraged. The widower was still grieving for his lost mate, and patiently looking for another. Interesting pair! Fate grant them success! I suppose it was for some fancied sympathy in our faces, or perhaps they surmised that we were on a similar expedition, that they told us their tale. We gave them all the condolence in our power; but how could we feel much sympathy for two mortals wandering in quest of their other half, when we ourselves consider another half quite superfluous, with convenient egotism concluding that we are sufficiently entire as we are. We endeavored to imbue them with our happy philosophy, but with little success; they still clung pertinaciously to the old-fashioned idea that they were not complete. Not being able to convince them of the wisdom of our plan, and anxious to assist in some way, we finally promised to inform them of the first lorn maiden we might meet in our travels, who was engaged in a similar search, and felt the same need as themselves. How could we do less? More we could not do, either from want of inclination or power.

After a sail of several hours, we reached Norfolk. The captain seemed to look upon us as a pair of runaways; but as he had no power to detain and send us back—for I believe there is no law for the arrest of fugitives who go from the North to the South—he politely helped us on in our own way, by getting a carriage, and seeing us safely deposited therein, with our numerous trunks, boxes and bundles. We soon obtained 213 board, and were just fairly housed, when the rain poured in torrents, accompanied by loud peals of thunder and flashes of lightning. It seemed like a welcome—a welcome from the elements. It was grand. What is there like a thunder-storm? And if so fine on land, what must it be at sea? said we to each other, and both declared we would go to sea, if only long enough to witness a storm.

I was going to give you my impression of Norfolk, formed from the slight view I had in riding from the boat to my present abode; but I have spent all my time and paper in getting here, and have already, doubtless, wearied your patience. Therefore, I will pause,

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contenting myself with the knowledge that you will glean from this, that, by favor of wind and tide, I have reached here safely, if nothing more.

### LETTER XXXIX.

Norfolk, Va.

As, by the reception of my former letters, you have given proof of your strength and patience, you must still expect to have them often exercised. But do not think you are a solitary victim in this respect. Have you not often seen how the strong have to bear burdens, which the weak know nothing of, merely because they are weak, and every one knows it, and favors them? But who would accept the timidity and helplessness of weakness, for the sake of escaping the burdens that always fall on the shoulders of the strong? There—I have paid you a compliment. I didn't mean to; but it's already written, so I'll let it pass. It is rather an indirect one. Perhaps you'll not be able to find it; but if you do, don't let it flatter you too much, thereby proving your weakness, and compelling me to take it back. You need not curl your lip with so much disdain at my caution, for I 214 find people every day who are perfectly invulnerable on every point, except self-love; but that is like the heel of Achilles,—by that they fall.

I like Norfolk better than either of the other cities I have been in. But this is partly owing to the favorable circumstances under which it was first seen. We saw it in its Sunday dress, and a clean one besides, washed by the drenching rain of the night before. We came into the city Saturday evening. I told you of the grand storm immediately after our arrival; therefore, as we went forth the next morning, every thing wore its finest appearance. The air was clear and cool, freed from every particle of dust; every leaf was sparkling with the water-drops still resting on them, the very bricks looked glad for the refreshing draught they had had; the water skirting the city lay in dreamy repose, and over all hung the grateful quiet of the Sabbath. How could we help being pleased, and thinking Norfolk a delightful place, seen on such a morning? After walking about, and taking a slight survey

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of the city, we entered one of the churches. I read the prayers, heard the music, which was not very good, and when the sermon came, as it did not interest me, busied myself with my own meditations. After I came home, I learned that we had heard the most eloquent of the clergy; but as the sentiment did not please me, and mere eloquence of manner is like a beautiful face without expression, you will understand my indifference.

It has been rainy and cloudy for several days, so we have kept ourselves carefully sheltered—people are so apt to frown when the sky is lowering; as though we had a right to envelope ourselves in coldness and gloom as soon as the sun withdraws his face. There ought to emanate enough warmth and gladness from each to keep ourselves at least in a genial atmosphere, if we cannot dispel the clouds from around our neighbors. But sometimes we suffer ourselves to be a little chilled, and then the fogs cluster around us, and we cannot at once break through or melt them away. Knowing this, we have not been out, for who would expose themselves to scowls, when, by waiting a little, they could have smiles. Besides this, we have been wearing dismal faces ourselves, and croaking lamentably—for our room is so situated, that not a ray of sunshine can penetrate it; and how can one expect birds to hop briskly and sing merrily, when confined in such a dismal place. To be sure, when we do come into the sunlight occasionally, we try to resume the old, cheerful song and light step; but our limbs are stiffening from dwelling in the damp, our throats seem to have filled up, our once gladsome chirp ends in a croak, and if we stay here much longer, there will be a new phenomenon in natural history—the transformation of birds into frogs. Not but what frogs are well enough in their place, and doubtless seem very musical to themselves and each other; but what bird, accustomed to the free wing and airy home, would exchange them for the chilly abiding-place and ungraceful jump of the frog. The very thought makes me shiver and begin to feel stiff! We shall have to seek a new home; there is no other way. I should think those who keep boarding-houses here would soon make a fortune—four dollars and a half per week, two in a room, about as cheerless as a prison, and “fire, lights, and toilet soap extra.” Verily it is worse than New-York, and I thought that unparalleled. But the sun rose clearly this

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morning, so there was no longer any excuse for idleness. We rose, cleared our throats, stopped croaking, crept forth into the sunshine, and, after being thoroughly warmed, regained our natural voices. Our first act was to call on the commissioner and secure a license, having still in mind our narrow escape at Petersburg. This done, we made a special call on each editor, to secure through the several papers an introduction to the people. My friend, fortunately, had 216 obtained several letters from the honorables at Washington, which she presented, thereby establishing her position and respectability; for whoever knew a M. C. to have aught to do with any one or any thing otherwise than respectable! But I, unfortunately, had not stopped in Washington, and had not a single letter—so it only remained for me to look as honest as I could, and go under cover of my friend's testimonials, which was a safe way, if the old adage be true, that “a man is known by the company he keeps.” True, or not, I had no disposition to question it in the present instance. The editors, who seemed equally surprised and amused at our novel undertaking, at once signified their willingness to give us a notice. But as the papers would not be out till to-morrow morning, we thought we might waive the ceremony of an introduction to our own sex, and spend to-day in calling upon them.

We loitered about, basking in the sunshine, hating to part; sauntered down to the water side, thought and said how much pleasanter it would be to spend the day thus, than in trying to persuade people that they wanted or needed books—for if they have no need, it is best for us to create one; in fine, tried a thousand innocent modes of escape from our unpleasant task, so much do we dislike making the commencement in a new place—where no one knows of, or expects us. But I find we all have a disposition to enjoy, rather than labor, and the happy faculty is, to make work a pleasure. This I can do now, there are so many agreeable things connected with my present occupation, that I can be happy in it. But to be compelled to do what you have no interest in, and no taste or love for, is to be flayed alive. It crushes the feelings, spoils the temper, and makes one bitter, discontented, and unhappy. If it is a work that duty requires you to perform, you can nerve yourself for it, and do it with cheerfulness; but if it falls to you merely by the 217 will of another, it is a



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hateful servitude. Children, those gems of life, many of them unpolished, 'tis true, but in the hands of the skilful worker, capable of being made lustrous ornaments, are oftener than any others the victims of this wicked practice. I can see now a pupil I once had in music. Poor girl! She could not tell when she made a discord—she had no idea of music, farther than a mechanical drumming on the keys—but she must learn because all young ladies play the piano; and she would soon be a young lady, and come out in society. So, day after day, she was driven to the hateful instrument, and left it either fretting, crying, or sullenly silent. But she did not learn music—that she never could learn; the harmony of her nature was being destroyed—she was losing her sunny temper by such an unnatural discipline. In compassion for the poor child, I advised the parents to allow her to give up music, and, for my pains, merely had the credit of wishing to rid myself of a troublesome pupil.

But I was going to tell you of our success with the ladies. Of all I called upon, only three were at home, at least, only three were visible. Of these, one was an intelligent, pleasant woman, who subscribed for a small book; the other I scarcely saw, she so soon decided that she wished nothing of the kind; and the third—poor woman! I see her still, as she came languidly forward, asking me to excuse her *dishabille*—giving me such a thorough sense of her weakness and indolence. She is the first woman I have seen, who would fully justify the opinion that many prejudiced ones at the North have of the indolence to be found at the South. It had come to be almost too much trouble for her to live. She had so many wants, but I—what a pity—I could not supply them. If she could but get some one to enter her family, take the care of housekeeping from her, be her companion, make her dresses—that great trouble of fine ladies generally, to get 10 218 their dresses made without the least exertion of theirs—care for her children, care for her—but stop; I'm sure I've enumerated enough for one common mortal to do, at least one who was not materially interested in her affairs. Well, if she could get some one to do all this, they should be treated as— *an equal!* And what would she do meanwhile? Breathe, I suppose. Poor woman! married before she had known any of the cares of life, now that



some light ones have come upon her, feeble from inaction, she is endeavoring to impose on another, duties which cannot be transferred. I wished within myself that I could make her see as distinctly as I did, what she is now and what she might be. Could she see, I think she would soon make choice of which to be. When she goes North, she takes one or two servants with her—"it is so much trouble to go to one's trunks one's self, and the hotel servants cannot be trusted to do that." I was in a hurry to get away; I was afraid her disease was contagious, and what should I do, so helpless. Instinctively, as I gained the street, I walked faster than usual, to prove to myself that I was as active as before—that I had lost none of my vigor from the atmosphere I had been breathing—for I was detained some time to hear the recital of her woes and wants. Willingly, I returned to my room; willingly would I fly, hop, or jump—do any thing, rather than crawl about so lifelessly.

My pen moves slower and slower, my eyelids are heavy, and my mind glimmers as faintly and feebly as my lamp; neither shedding much light on my writing, the one for want of oil, the other for want of repose. They must both be replenished. Good night!

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**LETTER XL.**

Norfolk, Va.

Good-bye! Good-bye! and our kind host, with a warm shake of the hand, helped us into the omnibus, and we were off to the depot. Our baggage checked, and ourselves seated in the cars, our host made his appearance. Welcome was his friendly face again, for we regretted leaving his fatherly care. He introduced us to a gentleman from New-York, who was also bound for Norfolk, remarking to him, as he left us, "I'll put these young ladies in your care," which attracted my notice to the gentleman introduced, who was to have charge of us. It being the first time I was ever put in another's care, I knew not the real meaning of the position we were to occupy. But the mild blue eye, and corpulent, easy form of our keeper, quieted my fears of being controlled, or that he would attempt to

control us; therefore my will was hushed, and I echoed my mate's "thank you," but not very heartily. Soon puff, puff, and that horrid whistle which so shocks one's nerves; but they are soothed quickly as we are flying away from the host of bandits and robbers that it must have called forth. At City Point our keeper served us with lemonade—a kind keeper! But I offered him, in return, cherries and all the fruits of the season, with which we abundantly supply ourselves on every trip, for I wished not to be indebted to him. On the boat he gave us an introduction to his travelling companions, two gentlemen from the same city. On further acquaintance, we learned that one was a widower as well as himself, and the other a bachelor. We took our seats in the cabin—I mean keeper and all. Bah! who is going to stay indoors, in a confined, half-cleaned room, when there is outdoors, unless the waves dash "sky high;" so I went out, and our keeper followed. Ah! just such a keeper as I should always like, one that I could lead.

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By and by the whole party came. It was one of my singing days, and sing I must, for one don't always have a steamboat accompaniment. They were all delighted to have me sing; but I sang on without any regard to the taste of my hearers, and our keeper began to look as if he wished I wouldn't, as my companion did not see fit to entertain all three who had gathered around her; so I only sang the louder. On I went in rhyme and song, sometimes in the deep and heavy tones of martial airs—then the softer melodies and most plaintive lays that I could conceive or imitate, until quite exhausted. They all looked delighted because of the cessation, though many regrets were expressed. Our fruits were brought to revive me, and after eating some cherries, I felt restored, and chatted with our keeper and the bachelor. Both talked much of their hearts; one had had his mildewed by the untimely exit of the mate he had chosen to make with him the voyage of life. He expressed himself greatly bereaved, although years had passed, and was now trying to find her counterpart. I believe he thought my companion to bear a striking resemblance to the lost one; while the other widower considered her a perfect picture of his wife. I remarked to them, by way of condolence, that they must have been remarkably handsome. But I thought perhaps

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that they, like all “blessings, brightened as they took their flight.” The bachelor chimed in about his heart, that it had never been touched by love, but expressed a fear that it was just about to receive that stroke, to reach that epoch that is expected to dawn upon every one's existence, of “falling in love,” when I frankly told him that he had no heart, and I flattered myself that I had proved to him quite conclusively, that what little he had received he had long since spent, superficially coquetting here and there, and had not an atom left. As love flies when repulsed, and vanishes in uncongenial climes, I heard no more of the bachelor's symptoms, and saw no appearance of a second 221 attack. After a good dinner I went on singing. Our clever keeper kept in the sunlight of my eye and the melody of my voice, pregnable to both. He had been to the Museum of Fowlers & Wells, and had his head examined, preliminary to his setting out on his travels. I remarked that they had also examined mine. Referring to the phrenological principle that heads were to be consulted, instead of hearts, in the association of partners, he suggested that ours might be matched heads, and proposed that those Arbiters of Destiny be consulted. Confiding in their valued science, I gave a qualified consent—that those gentlemen were possessed of my characteristics, and if, upon reference to them, he should receive assurances that it would be a union upon scientific principles, I could not say him nay. He left, assuring me that he should make a speedy return to New-York, and at the earliest moment should inform me of the result of the consultation. Ah! love and wooing are said to come in every one's life. My mate was still interesting her really agreeable companion—the other widower.

The captain looked at us as a pair of migrating birds, that had lost their way, and unconsciously strayed into a foreign clime. But as we did not flutter and seem distressed, he kept his fears to himself, and cheerfully aided us in our flight, by ordering a carriage to take us to a boarding-house that had been recommended to us. Leaving the wharf in our chariot—it might well be called a chariot, for it was open on all sides—he gave us a generous smile, with a graceful lift of his beaver. Smiles and bows are rather charming, even if they are studied, to give the best effect; for they are the ceremonial of genuine good feeling. So we spontaneously smiled and bowed, too, and were rapidly carried

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through a new city to a new boarding-house. Oh, dear! these are the saddest times in all our journeyings! We shrink together, half breathless. My mate grows pale, and my eyes grow 222 larger, and we breathe heavily. The voice of each is half choked with doubt, as we inquire, How will they receive us here? and the bearing of each citizen is sharply scanned, and we “reckon,” for we have left off “guessing,” that each will take a book; but the fluttering heart gives no such response. Then we wonder what prominence will present itself in our new boarding-house, which, of course, must be repulsive and hideous, for there are no prominences in the well-regulated domestic world. Oh! to have the homes right, is to have the whole world right.

We were accepted, after the usual introduction of ourselves, and conducted to a pleasant room, that was furnished by some boarders who were then absent, and the room we were to occupy would be vacant the next day. We did not dare dance with delight in anticipation of a reverse in our fate, in boarding-houses, till we had seen our room. A thunder-storm followed shortly after our arrival, but it was among the natural elements, therefore we thanked God, and went to sleep.

“And the morning was the first day.” Putting on our old bonnets, we attended the Episcopal church, as we find a harmony and devotion of spirit in their services. As a fine-looking, young minister launched into his sermon, my companion fell asleep. I was ashamed of her, and thought of giving her a shaking; but, looking around to see if the act would be observed, I noticed that a large portion of the congregation were in a similar state; so my darling companion might sleep; it was all right, if others did. I felt no farther mortification. I had heard that the pastor of this church was considered the first in the city in talent and eloquence. In the first division of his sermon, he betrayed a consciousness of his supposed eloquence, and drew the attention of his hearers more to his knowledge of its possession than the importance of the subject. Few ever become aware 223 of any particular talent, but they make it their *forte*. If it is in the outer garb—a medium of the inner—of the basis, a display renders the speaker either bombastic or superficial, and the charm, the power of his eloquence, is lost; for eloquence is only a dress, a conductor

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of the deeper—of the truth, and has its existence because of the truth. By any rest upon it for effect, both the garb and the truth are lost, and the hearers only acknowledge the vanity of the possessor. Besides, one doesn't enjoy hearing those who have always been sumptuously fed and clothed—who have seen poverty only at a distance, and never felt the grasp of the huge monster, preach what those should do who are in its fangs—tell of glorious struggle for the right, of denial in temptation, when one is torn by misfortune and perishing with hunger, and of the Godlike triumph! Such views, such admonitions, come understandingly only from those who have passed through the fiery furnace; and, to produce the true effect, a speaker can express only what is proved to him a truth, either by force of conviction or experience.

Our room! Do you want to be introduced to it? We were; and behold it was on the first floor! of good size, comfortably furnished, passably tidy, with one window—and what else? Why, the rays of the sun had not glanced into it for years, since a high building was erected within an arm's distance of that end of the house. The room was damp and mouldy, the atmosphere oppressive, and I scarcely slept from continual repentance for disregarding physical laws, and from sympathy with abused nature; so we found another boarding-house; and our room now is light, dry, and airy, and receives the sun at morning and mid-day through dancing foliage. So now we shall have to find some other deficiency to complain of, which I begin to believe is half a whim—and don't you? It is so easy to find fault when one is served by others. I seldom give you any description of 224 the different cities we visit. They strike me as very similar in the main. But this one has water scenery, which is its marked feature and chief beauty, and some shipping that adds to its life. But the principal attractions are the people and market, as both are excellent—superior. What adds more to the quiet of one's nature than a fine market and a good cook, with success in business? How cheerily life goes on!

### LETTER XLI.

Norfolk, Va.

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I have delayed writing you because I have been so much occupied, hand and mind both busy, till I was too weary to write any letters that I was not absolutely compelled to—as one occasionally on business, and one to my brother, to keep him informed of my whereabouts.

We have been very successful here thus far. You have no idea what generous notices the editors gave us. There must be something in gallantry, after all, else it would not produce such excellent results. If we had been gentlemen, I don't believe they would have done half as much for us—I'm sure they wouldn't without being paid. They were a little extravagant, 'tis true; but who ever had any desire to murmur at an excess of generosity? And listen, my friend: some of them called us beautiful (don't read this to any of your friends, because they'll say I'm vain); but do you suppose they really meant it, or was that also merely a gallant speech? How provoking to be unable to separate the truth! It isn't very important, but then one likes to know. We didn't expect such a compliment. Nobody ever said so before, and we never really thought so; though, to be sure, sometimes when we look in the glass with our very best looks on, we decide that though our complexions are not very clear, and we haven't very regular features, still there is a nameless something in our faces that must be interesting. And I presume if we continue to think thus, we shall be in time quite handsome, the state of one's mind affects their looks so much. Perhaps, after all, it was all meant for my companion. But however it may be, it is of no great consequence, for those whom some consider pretty the next pronounce plain. It's a mere matter of opinion, though there are those, I believe, that all seem to allow have some claim to beauty; but as I cannot, by the utmost stretch of vanity, persuade myself that I am one of those, I feel quite indifferent on the subject; and I believe one is never so ugly as to be repulsive to one's friends.

But thanks—a thousand thanks—to the editorial corps: they have done nobly for us. No one is surprised to see us now, for of course all take some one of the papers, and so all know that they shall receive a call, and hold themselves in readiness for our approach—

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some of them armed to resist Yankee ingenuity and cunning, but most of them wearing a smile of welcome. It is so much better to be announced, that I think we shall always adopt this course hereafter; for if we go to any small towns, where they have no daily papers, why, we might have our mission stated by the various pastors to their flocks. I believe they usually announce the arrival and departure of missionaries, and in that light we are entitled to a notice from them; and we should succeed so much better then with our own sex, all “right-minded” women have such a profound respect for whatever is recommended by their minister. For one, I'm afraid I should have to stay away from church. I should have to do as young ladies do in the country, where the fashion is for the minister or deacon to announce “marriage intended.” In those cases, I believe the intended bridegroom goes to church as usual, but the bride elect remains at home. I suppose it is bashfulness 10\* 226 on her part I wonder why she don't send him alone to be married, or she might send a substitute. Why isn't marriage by proxy more fashionable? It may be it will become so in the process of refinement and the rotation of fashion. It spares the feelings so much! I think I shall wait till the custom is more prevalent, because, as I frequently tell my friends, it is such an agreeable method of getting over a consummation devoutly to be wished (I'm sure every *young* lady agrees with me); and another reason, which I will whisper to you, is, I think it must be easier to untie the knot, if one isn't quite suited. Yes, I shall wait. Why need one be in haste, when most agree that we enjoy more in the anticipation of any thing than in the actual possession.

But of all the chivalrous scions of this renowned State, I have recently met one that I think will bear off the palm. Thinking, I suppose, that I should be interested in all who had preceded me in my present employment, he voluntarily gave me some of his own experience. Being at one time in ill health, the physicians advised him to travel, and, at the same time, said his mind must be occupied, without being very much taxed, to render his travelling really beneficial. Looking about for something that would suit him, he finally took the agency of a popular book just published, and began to solicit subscribers. But, alas for his books, his health, and himself! he had only called at two or three places, when,



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upon entering a house, a boy called him a pedler; the servant coming to the door, looked at him as he would any other pedler, and said his mistress didn't want to buy any thing; and the result was, he put the book in his trunk, and travelled without any employment, for his "Virginia blood could not brook being called a pedler." Is not that valor? Was not there a brave spirit? I begin to think I must look out for my New-England blood. Is it quite proper that I, a descendant of the pilgrims, as I suppose, should be engaged 227 in selling books? Am I not sullyng the dignity of my ancestry? These are grave questions, my friend. It is true I have hitherto considered any honest vocation, honestly pursued, honorable; and though peddling has been considered rather derogatory, as I saw nothing intrinsically mean, I thought that perhaps *it* might be dignified by frankness and fairness of dealing—as only dishonesty renders any thing really disgraceful. I have even been called a pedler; and though at first, from association and education, it sounded rather queer and unmusical applied to me, still I attributed it to the lawless, mischievous spirit of boys, and was not disturbed by it. But now I find one of the *stronger* sex turned from his purpose by one such incident, which leads me to inquire whether there is not a want of sensibility on my part—a nice regard for my station—that I am so indifferent; for how could one expect a man—"strong-minded," sensible man, to be influenced by a weak motive. But do you suppose when he undertook the business, that he forgot that he was a Virginian? or did he forget that he should be a pedler? or perhaps he thought no one would tell him of it, and he might admit the fact to himself I did not think to ask him whether it was being a pedler, or being called a pedler, that he could not brook. As he accepted the employment merely for his health, I wonder that he gave it up; for every body admits that it is perfectly honorable to work, if you are not compelled to. It is so much more genteel to do something because you like to, or for your health, than because you are obliged to support yourself. But where was that prim body, Common Sense, all this while? She has such a happy faculty of helping people out of such dilemmas (you know she aided me awhile ago, for which I shall ever be grateful), that she would have settled the matter in a different way. She would have suggested another idea—presented a new view to the Virginia blood, and enabled him 228 to go on for the sake of his health. It is a pity she was not near him. I tell you, dear M



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—, after all that has been said, there is no one whose presence we need to court more assiduously than this Common Sense. There is no one who is of more service in everyday life—there is no better adviser in a case of doubt or emergency—no one upon whom we may rely at all times, more safely; for when we heed her, we always acquit ourselves well, if not brilliantly. Yes, be she goddess, god, or demi-god, she deserves great homage.

Though this incident suggested some doubts in my mind as to the propriety of my present occupation, they are now pretty much dispelled; for have not Yankees, from time immemorial, at least ever since Yankees have existed, have they not been renowned as pedlers? How is it that they possess such talent in this particular branch? It cannot all have been acquired; no, it must have been inherited. I am fully satisfied that there was one pedler, if no more, came over in the Mayflower; therefore it is a legitimate occupation, and of honorable origin in this country. Any further back than the Puritans, I cannot trace it; but I would recommend it to antiquarians, as an interesting subject of research, and one in which there is a large class that I presume are equally as much interested as myself, and would receive any light upon the subject with great pleasure. Who knows but what the first pedler was a prince in disguise, or, perhaps, a—princess! Who knows?

### LETTER XLII.

Norfolk, Va.

We have a new home, plenty of air, and plenty of sunshine; and we two spirits, encased in mortality, do live a happy life. Joy is often with us. Contentment seldom leaves us. 229 Love binds us every day more strongly together. Discord rarely approaches; and Sorrow, when she comes, abides not long with spirits so opposed to her. Sometimes, after a toilsome day, I return at evening attended by pale Despondency, but I find my friend already awaiting me, with Hope and Gladness, her companions; therefore my dark attendant enters not, but flees from the presence of those radiant spirits of light, who with glad smiles welcome me, and gradually dissipate the gloom imparted by my sombre guide.

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Sometimes this unwelcome Despondency accompanies my friend; but not often are both entirely abandoned by the handmaids of Happiness; and where there is one of these, it is difficult for any of Sorrow's mournful train to find entrance—we all love brightness so much better than gloom. But, if once we allow Sadness to gain dominion over us, it is hard to break the bonds, though we do not like to wear them. But why should we be sad? With love and truth, and “with a heart for any fate,” what need we fear? If what seem to us trials fall to our lot, we know that the All-Good still has us under his benignant eye; that whom he loveth he chasteneth, and that he will lovingly guide us through all our perils. Let us have faith in him. How noble this life might be made, which we sometimes in moments of discontent pronounce mean and unsatisfying—how noble it might be made, if we would not be content with high purpose merely, but take care that it be crowned by high and fearless deeds; if we would allow what there is of good and generous within us to expand and govern us, instead of limiting it by prejudice and artificial views of life. If fortune doesn't shower her golden favors upon us, we may make ourselves rich in spirit, and give of our abundance bounteously; and we should thereby grow large and generous—strong for ourselves and for each other—pursuing our way fearlessly, regardless of the opinion of our neighbor, knowing that in time 230 he would see the motive, and recognize the justice of our act. It is this generosity of nature that we all need to cultivate. We must learn how beautiful it is to impart as well as receive; and bear ever in mind that a kind word, a glad smile, and a helping hand cheerfully proffered, are oftentimes of more real service than a purse of gold; and the former may be gratefully accepted by the proud spirit which would indignantly reject the latter. It is an every-day saying, and a true one, that words cost nothing; yet they, even they, often re-awaken faith, and give new courage to the sinking heart. Sweet sympathy, whether expressed by word, look, or tone, or by the silent clasp of the hand, is always welcome, and forms a bright link in the chain of human love. And we can scarcely tell what gleams of joy these trifling expressions bring, unless our own experience has taught us. If we have ourselves been enveloped in the darkness of sorrow—darkness so impenetrable, that, turn which way we would, there was not a path to be seen, nor a ray of light; if we have been thus, and have sunk down oppressed by gloom,

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and have then been roused by kindly and gentle tones, whispering words of affection, and pointing to the bright star of hope that still shines above, and was only obscured by our tear-dimmed eyes—if we have been thus placed, and thus ministered unto, then do we know and realize how much lies in words—simple words. But we are all too much inclined to encompass ourselves with a high wall, which we dignify by calling reserve, pride, and sensitiveness; but which, when rightly named, is simply selfishness, though many who shelter themselves by it, would be surprised to have their boasted pride receive the repulsive name of selfishness. They have been educated to cherish it, and they have done so without ever thinking it might become so prominent a quality, or examining into its character and tendency. Do not think I wish altogether to condemn pride. By no means. 231 I only say that it needs to be well watched, and checked before it reaches an excess. Though there is much selfishness in proud people generally, there is also one strong redeeming trait. I think one seldom finds them small and mean—this very characteristic forbids it; and perhaps there is no character that we admire more than one possessing in a high degree this quality, but subdued, either by an unhappy experience, by some painful circumstance in life, or by a firm principle acquired from seeing to what false and fatal results its indulgence leads. When we see such a person we cannot, too much admire them, for we see all the nobleness of pride without the alloy of selfishness.

I met to-day an agreeable woman. It has come to be quite an event now, for us to have any conversation with our own sex. We have ceased visiting them, because we had no success, and had no more time to spend in exhibiting ourselves as natural curiosities. They will persist in thinking us “mighty bold,” because we travel alone, and call on men; and how can they help it? They can only see things as they do, and the same is true of us; and we must each have our own point of view, no matter how far apart they are, or how different things appear from these separate points. Mine is mine, and I cannot see things from my neighbors' if I would. If they cannot see any propriety in our proceedings, of course they cannot say they do, or act as if they did; and if we feel that we are doing right, we must steadily pursue our own course, so that it only remains for each to be as

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charitable as possible toward the other, and keep her vision as clear and unprejudiced as may be, that she may discern between good and evil. Ladies in this country always have the preference, and we give it to them, by invariably calling first upon them, when we enter a place; but, if they excuse themselves from taking any books, by saying that their husbands buy them, how can they be surprised 232 that we go to them? I'm sure they do the same as send us; for if they would take the books themselves, we should be quite satisfied, and never think of troubling their lords. One lady saw the truth of this, and acted upon it. She took several books herself, and then remarked, that it would not be necessary for me to call upon her husband.

But the lady that I saw to-day, I was exceedingly pleased with, she was so entirely without pretence—easy, natural, and courteous. I called at her husband's store, and, he being absent, she seemed to be taking his place, which surprised me at first, one so seldom sees here a lady behind the counter; but, after a few moments' conversation, I lost all my surprise, for I saw that she was one of those happy specimens of the womanly character, that glide into any position with equal naturalness and ease, and remain in all equally unembarrassed—every where the same pleasant and refined woman. What an attraction we always feel toward such a character. If pretenders could but once see the real charm of pure nature, they would throw aside at once and for ever all their seeming. By this they would not only render themselves more agreeable, but, I think, would find life considerably less burdensome; for, where they now arrange and consider beforehand, they would then do and say what nature might dictate, and their own good sense approve, without any misgivings; thus sparing themselves much trouble. There is nothing truer than that “one touch of nature makes the whole world kin.” Let one strong, natural person enter a small company, composed of artificial and proper ones, and see how soon he exercises a happy influence. Their tongues and spirits are loosed; their very limbs seem to grow more flexible; they feel in every way more at ease; in short, they all seem to be thawing, if one may so express it. Those whom we have considered icebergs, we find, only had the outward appearance, which concealed a great deal 233 of warmth. But this outward

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covering has gradually grown firmer and stronger, from the cold atmosphere it has been in, and the ice surrounding it, till it would probably have always passed for a genuine iceberg, instead of a real living being, had it not been found by one of its own nature, but one who had kept in a natural state; and, being free, had nothing to do but divest others of this artificial covering, that some seem to think an essential protection, as if simple nature was not a sufficient protector of itself. Such persons are real blessings. They strip off all the innumerable appliances of conventionality, and make those whom they meet appear, for once in their lives, if no more, in the simple garb of nature. There are many of us who have a thorough hatred of this artificial state we live in, but have not the strength and courage to get above it, and prevent its influencing us; therefore, we welcome those who, by strength of will, have broken their own bonds, for they come as angels of mercy sent for our release.

I believe I have written you quite a sermon; perhaps I shall take a text next time; the only difficulty in that case would be, I should expose myself to criticism, for not “sticking to my text;” for that you know I never could do, and the faculty of doing that, all good judges, I believe, pronounce indispensable to a good sermonizer. The safest way for me will, therefore, be to leave off the text, until I have had more practice; you can supply any that you choose, if any is necessary, for the understanding of the sermon.

### **LETTER XLIII.**

Norfolk, Va.

I received your reply to my last letter in due time, and read it with great pleasure, although it was somewhat saucy. So 234 you think you can find no text that will suit my sermons? Very well—they will do just as well without. And then you proceed to say, “I was amazed and amused at your preaching upon the folly of pride; you who have hitherto defended it so loudly, grasped it so firmly, and, in fact, made it peculiarly your weapon and armor of protection. Pray tell me, were you in an unusually humble state of mind when you wrote,

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or were you trying to see how good an argument you could make against your own ‘easily besetting sin’?” Neither, my friend. I acknowledge the truth of all you say. But I have found that, though my cherished weapon has often served me well in self-defence, it has also often repelled those who would kindly approach me. By frequent and needless use, I have rendered it conspicuous and myself offensive; and though I would still retain it, I am trying to learn to wield it with discretion, and keep it out of sight when there is no call for it; for it is better to go entirely unarmed, than to have your weapons so glaringly prominent as to frighten all, even the most well disposed, away. I do not say that I have learned this, or that I now pretend to practise all I preach; but I see and acknowledge the necessity and propriety of doing it, which is more than I did formerly, and for my short comings I cannot do better than quote the words of our Divine example, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” I am endeavoring to profit by some of the lessons of experience, the only really beneficial lessons we ever receive. We may be criticised justly, and told of our faults again and again, but if we have not seen and felt the evil effects of them, we pay little heed to the admonitions of others. We use a thousand artifices to silence conscience, and place ourselves at ease—think that our friends are officious, that they have clearer eyes for faults than virtues, and that for some reason they rather enjoy reminding us of ours. So we hear their criticisms, are a little annoyed at the time, 235 but soon forget them, and go on as before. But when, by some act of our own, we are convinced of error, then we begin to think how we may amend. You will understand now, dear M—, why I wrote you so differently of pride from what you have often heard me speak. I think I see it now in a more truthful and sober light. Even when I used to cling to it so tightly, I sometimes acknowledged to myself that it was rather troublesome, but thought I would not part with any of it for all that.

Yesterday we gave ourselves a holiday, and, thanks to the courtesy and kindness of two gentlemen who attended us, we visited the Naval Hospital, and went on board the big ship “Pennsylvania.” This ship, the first man-of-war I have ever been on board, is the largest in the navy, and is now used as a receiving ship. Seen from a distance it looks rather large,

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but does not surprise you till you draw nearer, and come alongside, when it seems, and is, really huge. We came up to it in a small row-boat, stepped out, and ascended a few steps that led to a square opening, which proved to be a door, which we crept through, and found ourselves on one of the decks, of which there are four. I was astonished and delighted. It was so spacious, so clean, and so much order prevailed. I had no idea before how much room one could have on board such a ship. And every thing seemed so massive, so substantial. One of our cavaliers sent a message to an officer on board, who soon appeared, and with ready and easy politeness proceeded to show us the mammoth ship, and the curiosities connected therewith. Every thing looked so neat and comfortable, that I was almost wishing I had been a boy, for then I could have been a sailor; but as I glanced at the rough faces of those around me, who would in that case have been my messmates, learned that many of them could not read, and bethought me of the hard fare they often have, I lost so much of my enthusiasm as to conclude that I 236 should be quite content to be a passenger, and retain my sex, It happened to be at the dinner hour that we were there; consequently they were all most industriously employed eating. From the savory odors wafted to us, I concluded they were having soup. There seemed to be very little ceremony. They were standing up around small tables ranged along on each side of the deck, and I believe all at one table dipping into one dish; but that I will not vouch for, as I only took an occasional glance at them, not liking to appear too inquisitive. I wonder how they can be contented to remain here month after month, and year after year—the same dull routine every day. I can readily understand why they adopt the life, and love it when they can go to sea; but to be stationary, and live so monotonously, I should think they would jump overboard, just for a change. Even being allowed frequently to go on shore would be little satisfaction to me, since I should always have the consciousness of my obligation to return at such a time. But they seemed very well satisfied, so I will be.

Having seen all that was to be seen on the ship (the officers by the by were all absent excepting one or two), and having thanked the one who had so patiently conducted us, we returned to our boat, and were rowed by two stalwart Africans to the Naval Hospital,



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located on a point of land at a short distance from the ship, and directly opposite Norfolk. This is the finest, or one of the finest hospitals of the kind in the United States. It has an appearance of great finish and elegance, is most admirably situated, fronting on the water, and altogether seems a fit resort for invalids in the navy, since they can still have the fresh breezes to which many of them have been so long accustomed. We were very cordially received by the doctor who presides there, a fine chivalrous old Scotchman, who kindly went through the building with us, entertaining us as he went, by his lively, 237 genial conversation. Every thing testified to the comfort and order of the establishment, and, fortunately for our entire enjoyment of the scene, almost all the inmates at the present time were able to be up about the house and the grounds, breathing the delicious atmosphere, especially delicious at this place, where it is cooled and freshened by the sea-breezes. May it breathe new life into their enfeebled frames, and bring back health and vigor of body and mind. For what is there that cannot be more patiently and hopefully borne than sickness? In health we allow a thousand troubles to discourage and fret us, and think it inevitable; but let once wasting disease come upon us, rendering us utterly prostrate, and how we wonder that, with health our portion, we ever found aught to murmur at. With what earnestness and sincerity we promise ourselves, if we are restored, to endure all things! But ah! too often the resolution passes away with the pain that inspired it, and returning strength brings back the old spirit. But health—health is the one treasure to be prized above all others; for if we lose it, all other possessions have lost half their value. Let us guard it with a miser's care.

After we had taken a survey of the house, the good doctor introduced us into the garden, a fairy-like haunt, adorned with shrubbery, trees, and flowers, and so beautifully shaded, so quiet, that I wanted to sit down among the green leaves and flowers, bid good-bye to the world, and give myself up to enjoyment—the enjoyment of the dreamy and tranquil mood that the place had so naturally induced. But life cannot be dreamed away, however much we may at times wish that it might; and knowing this I kept on with my companions, determined to live as much as I could in the present, and trying to content my grasping



spirit with the large bouquet that (thanks to the generous doctor) I had to bring away with me—short-lived memento of this charming asylum for the sick,

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What in the world is there so beautiful as flowers? What gift so graceful as a collection of these gems of nature? Somehow my relations with persons are changed, when they have given me flowers; and I believe a rogue of a boy, who was once a pupil of mine, understood this; for he used to try my patience terribly sometimes, with his mischievous pranks, but every morning he would bring me a bunch of roses, and that was an effectual peace-offering. How could I scold him after that? Remembering your extravagant love of flowers, I often wish, dear M—, that I could send you some, the growth of this southern clime; but the generous wish is always followed by the reflection, that they would have lost all their beauty before they could reach your far-off home; therefore it remains ungratified. We returned from our short excursionbn soon after noon, but without any inclination for business; so much better does one love to play than to work, especially after having had the work for a long time, and only just tasting the play. So we humored ourselves in idleness for the remainder of the day, and this morning found it quite easy to recommence our labors.

#### LETTER XLIV.

Norfolk, Va.

“ Have you settled in Norfolk, or why are you staying there so long?” Thus writes my brother, and you indirectly ask the same question. No, I have not settled here. But it is getting dreadfully warm, and we move slowly about, and consequently accomplish very little in a day. Sometimes we begin to fear we are growing indolent, and think we ought to be leaving; but finally we come to the comfortable conclusion, that there is no use in hurrying through life; and indeed, it would be quite dangerous to do so at the present 239 high temperature. Besides, we have become more accustomed to the climate, are very

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comfortably domiciled, and enjoy ourselves very well despite the heat. We are beginning now to feel ourselves considerably at home, and are not anxious to move on. Since writing you, I have visited a kind of negro jail. I was conducted thither by a slave-dealer, whom I accidentally met while prosecuting my business. Some one informed him that I had expressed a great desire to see a person engaged in his traffic, which however was not true; and as I suppose he was too modest to say to me at once that he was one, he offered to conduct me to the jail, which was also a depot for negroes, earnestly assuring me that I should be well treated, which was quite unnecessary, as I had no fears on that ground, never having made up my mind that those who traffic in negroes differ essentially from other men. In fact, I have never thought much about them, and have not sought any such places as this, having no particular curiosity, and knowing that my mind would not be changed by any thing I might see, no matter whether the picture was fair or foul. But I remembered your inquisitiveness upon this subject, and besides that, I had never called on this man in soliciting subscribers; so I took my books and went, thinking perhaps I might get a subscriber, and gain some information for you. I was received with entire courtesy, and having exhibited my books to the proprietor, and taken his subscription for two of them, I was a little surprised by his saying that he dealt in "wool and ivory," and offering to show me some specimens of these commodities. Not knowing then that this is a current expression among slave-dealers, I did not at the moment understand what he meant. But I soon comprehended, and followed, as he led the way into a kind of yard, paved with bricks, and well secured on all sides, where I found a small party of negroes, male and female, apparently sunning themselves. There were but few now—240 he had just sent most of them on South. Some of the women remained in one of the rooms, of which there seemed to be two opening into this inclosure, one for the men and another for the women. These women were ordered out, and stood up demurely in a row before me, as if they expected I was a purchaser. One of the young girls, I judge from the description given, was rather emulous of the character of a Topsy; but I regarded her as not a very successful rival. She lacked the real genius that rendered her illustrious type so fascinating. She looked simply ugly, while Topsy was the perfect embodiment of

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shrewdness and mischief. I felt no interest in her as a character; nor was there any thing peculiar about any of them. There was the same variety of countenance that you would find in any such collection. Some looked sullen and hardened, some good-natured, and some dejected and desponding. They all seemed tolerably comfortable. One fine-looking boy he pointed out, whom he would sell very cheap to me, for the sake of having him free; but cheap as he considered him, it was too much for my purse, else I should have liked to give him liberty; for he seemed one who was all ready to enjoy it, young, vigorous, and intelligent. But in good time they will all be free. While conversing with my conductor, as I returned, I could not help thinking he would rather be in some other employment. Perhaps the feeling was only momentary, and perhaps it did not exist at all, and was merely my fancy; for one would suppose a man would step out of a vocation for which he had a very great distaste. Still, however legitimate trafficking in negroes may be, it must, to a man of heart, be disagreeable, and I believe there are few who do not at times feel it so; but like many other hated employments, it is borne for the money it brings.

They are inveterate church-goers here in the South; and all the churches are strictly evangelical. I heard so much of the eloquence of the minister who preached where I went the first Sunday I was here, that last Sunday I went again, determined to keep my eyes and ears open, and see if I had been asleep the first time, that I did not better appreciate him. But I did not hear him. He was absent, and had left in his place a man sufficiently stupid and prosy to put a whole congregation asleep. He was still laboring away at his sermon, as I half opened my eyes and peered cautiously around to see if my nap had been observed by my neighbors; but a glance sufficed to quiet my fears. I found them all apparently in such a drowsy state, that for once their curiosity was lulled. Such sermons act as slight narcotics; and, considered as such, they may have some value, since they give an hour of grateful repose—rest to the body and mind.

How few ministers of religion there are who touch the heart or the soul at all! Occasionally we find one that wakes and gives intensity to our highest aspirations, one that makes us really stronger; and we at once regard him with child-like and reverential trust. We are

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ready to sit meekly at his feet and receive instruction, even as Mary sat at the feet of the sinless Jesus. But such persons are too rarely met. Instead of them we find cold and stiff machine-like beings, who, year after year, go through the same forms, but have no enthusiasm, no earnestness, and therefore inspire none.

I am frequently questioned as to my belief; people are so anxious to learn to what creed you subscribe, or whether you indorse any; as if that was all-important—as if that signified any thing in comparison with the life. But the particular denomination that you belong to, seems the most essential point with the “unco good,” as Burns calls them—Burns, the peasant poet—the glory of Scotland. Blessings on his memory! I love to meet Scotchmen, they have such a warm, glowing affection for this their gifted brother. He seems to be regarded as a kind of household god, for which they feel great reverence, and, at the same time, an affectionate familiarity. They recognize his genius, his sterling independence and honesty, and they look up to him as a superior; they see his faults, his weaknesses, and they feel that he is one of them, exposed, and sometimes yielding, to the like temptations as themselves, and a profound pity is excited rather than condemnation. It is hard to condemn one who bewails his instability so bitterly and so earnestly. We cannot but compassionate one who writes that “prudent, cautious self-control is wisdom's root,” and yet knew so well that this was what he most lacked. But how manfully he bore his hard fate! With what noble pride he avoided the least dependence! And what sublime truths he uttered for the cause of humanity! Some of his sentences are of themselves whole sermons, and they almost startle you sometimes with their sad truthfulness. But he passed early to the better land; and, though we may regret it for ourselves, for we have lost a genuine poet, and an honest man,

—“the noblest work of God,”

still for him we may rejoice. And, in reading his life and his letters, where are so faithfully chronicled his seasons of woe and despondency, I experience an emotion of thankfulness that he is now beyond the reach of those cares that so harassed his brave spirit while

here. I only wish he was better known than he is. Among his own countrymen one scarcely finds any so poor that they have not some kind of a copy of his works, and none so ignorant that they do not know something of their noble-spirited bard. But among others he is not sufficiently well known; for if he was he would be more universally admired.

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**LETTER XLV.**

Norfolk, Va.

We leave this place in a few days, but not without some regret, for we have several excellent friends here. We have been treated with uniform courtesy, and not one thing has occurred really to disturb or annoy us; and what wonder if we do hesitate in making a new acquaintance, when we are so well satisfied with the present? But the world moves on, and we must move with it, either backward or forward, whichever way we will, and may the will and the endeavor ever be forward and upward. We go from here to Portsmouth, which is situated opposite this city, and connected with it, by means of two ferry-boats, that are kept constantly running during the day and part of the evening. Norfolk seems to regard Portsmouth very much as a city Miss regards her country cousin—very well in her way, and in her native place very sensible and honest, but so homespun, that she could never shine in the sphere of her polished city friends. Whenever they speak of Portsmouth, it is with an air that plainly says, “This is only our country cousin;” and I doubt not that, when I have made the acquaintance of said cousin, I shall hear of the “airs” assumed by her self-satisfied relative of the city. It is so natural to retaliate. I believe nobody was ever severely criticized, that they did not make some criticism on the critic; no matter whether they expressed it or not, it was in the mind. But as for these two cousins, you and I have both read stories, ay, absolutely known cases, where the country cousin has eclipsed her more pretending city relative, when they have had equal chance for trial; and who knows but it will be so in this case? At any rate, I mean to take a sharp look at this cousin, when I find myself in her presence, and see what her capabilities are—see how much she is now,

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and of how much 244 she gives promise in future, and then judge impartially between the two. I can then tell something what the chances of each would be, in case of earnest rivalry.

It is growing so warm, that we begin to think seriously of flying back to the North; but we cannot go at once, we must complete what we have begun. But this scorching sun makes me impatient. At this season, there is no dew at night, so it seems almost as warm in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, as it is at midday; and there has been no rain for so long a time, that we are getting withered and parched, fairly famishing for a refreshing shower. I expect we shall come back with our faces overspread by a decided nut-brown hue, imparted by such bright sunbeams, that one would never dream of being burned by them, they seem so clear and bright, till suddenly the dark shade appears, proving that they have a latent power against which one must guard.

In my perambulations to-day, I called on Mr. James, the novelist, and the British Consul here. He is, I should think, a good specimen of the English gentleman—social, easy, and good-humored. I was a little surprised, at first, to find him so old, though he is by no means an old man; but I always associate an author with the heyday of life. I haven't exactly the idea,—at least, I don't believe they are exempted from the common fate of mortals, in this respect; still I am always disappointed, if I do not find them young. This is especially true, in respect to romance writers, perhaps because youth is so invariably their theme. I wonder if there is no romance, when one grows old. There must be, I think, if it was but written; for we meet sometimes those who retain so much of the freshness of youth, in spite of the advance of years. Such persons cannot have outlived all romance; but I wish they would give some account of it, and not leave us to suppose it all passed with the evanescent 245 bloom on the cheek. But enough of romance. I am prosy, I fear. But it is so difficult for some persons to write a letter without becoming prosy, and I belong, I believe, to that unfortunate class. My brains are something like my body, they act only from necessity. They must be stirred by an answer, else they produce nothing but dull and stupid words. I believe this is the reason why so many can talk better than

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they can write. Naturally, their brains are not active; that is, of themselves they are not, but they are easily roused by another, and when roused, sometimes astonish one by their productions. Therefore, some who never get beyond mediocrity as writers, appear very brilliant in conversation. In writing, you have nothing to animate you; not a face to give you an inspiring look; not a voice to animate you with its tone; not a thought to command an answering one from you. You seem to yourself as calm and waveless as a sea in perfect repose, and your mind seems and is becalmed; and if it has not within itself some propelling power—if it has not all-potent steam, it must depend on foreign aid, and patiently remain immovable, till the breeze arises that will again give it motion. In conversation, the mind always has some movement, even if it does not progress much, though occasionally a clever gale drives it on rapidly, unless the company is very dull, and in that case, one is licensed themselves to be dull.

There is one practice which I believe I have never mentioned to you, and which seems to be quite characteristic of the Old Dominion, that is, tobacco chewing. Almost every man here is more or less addicted to this cleanly habit. There is enough of this every where—enough and too much at the North; but I think I have nowhere found it so near being a universal accomplishment as in Virginia. I wonder the ladies don't devise some means for abolishing this. I should think they might assemble together, and resolve 246 unanimously, “that whereas our other halves do find such delectable pleasure in the use of a certain weed, resolved that we, in order to share this enjoyment, do adopt the use of said weed, powdered, and do continue in the same till we both shall consent to eschew it altogether.” To have my husband enjoying so much that I had no part or parcel in, would not suit my woman's rights notions of equality. Besides, would not every gentleman acknowledge that it would seem decidedly more social to have his wife, instead of sitting with naught to do but look at him, while he puffs a segar or rolls the quid, like a sweet morsel, under his tongue—would it not be more social to have her at the same time quietly taking a pinch of snuff? Then if they chose to, both give up their habit—for I think in this case they must be mutually disgusted—if they both gave up, one would have some faith in the “mutual

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forbearance” that married people lay so much emphasis on, and profess to practise so much. This is peculiarly an American habit; in comparison one finds little elsewhere. It is a pity it could not be rooted out, for it is an abomination to all persons having sight and smell, who do not themselves practise it. Since money does what nothing else can, I wish more would adopt the plan of an acquaintance I have at the North, who owns and rents the next house to his own, and rents it a hundred dollars under price, for the sake of having some one who in no way uses tobacco, having had the benefit of his neighbor's smoke during one season, as they both sat in their balconies in the summer evenings.

I think Yankees need no longer have the reputation of being the greatest cheats extant, for I am told by some one, almost every day, of a woman who has been here and in the other cities we have visited, taking subscribers upon the strength of a prospectus, for a work professing to be written by some member of her family, and receiving the money, 247 which was several dollars, at the same time, and has never yet brought the book, although it has been two or three years since she first came. But this woman, I will state for the credit of Yankees and the benefit of those who think them unparalleled in imposition, is no Northerner, but comes from as far South as New Orleans, and is known in our Northern cities from having stopped at some of the first hotels there—remained as long as suited her, and when she was ready to leave, had nothing with which to pay her bills, except her trunk and herself, neither of which were considered sufficiently valuable to be worth retaining—so she was allowed to go. It is no marvel that people lose their confidence, after instances of such downright dishonesty; and for this reason we have been especially careful not to promise more than we could perform; and, if any one is disappointed or deceived, the fault is not ours, for we have certainly aimed to be perfectly plain and frank. Emerson says—

“Whoso feedeth men, serves few; He serves all, who dare be true.”

And this is equally true in the reverse. No one is false or dishonest without injuring more than the one person with whom he is dealing—without injuring all. So, as many, often



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and always, we may say, are affected by the unfairness of one, this should of itself be an inducement to honesty, if there were no higher; for, by permitting ourselves in the least deceit, we are lending our countenance to the very things in others by which we shall suffer.

### LETTER XLVI.

Norfolk, Va.

We have been here two months, and have no knowledge of when we shall get away. I “reckon” we are fascinated, 248 —the world says my companion is. I don't know. I will not say that either of us are not, until we make an effort to move, which is not desirable at present. We have concluded that this is the Paradise of the South, and shall continue to think so, I suppose, until we find a place that pleases us more. We cannot conceive of an added improvement, without it is—yes, there is one—the society of our own sex, as we have scarcely spoken to one since we have been here. We canvassed among them the first day; I saw but two; all the others being “not at home”—the usual apology. One or two gentlemen sent me to their wives, which was really acceptable; and I must admit that a genuine Southern lady is the most charming of all American women—so little pretence and so much good-heartedness, in the general character. The second Sabbath after coming here, I attended the colored church, which is always held in the afternoon. There was a Methodist quarterly meeting, and the house was crowded. As I entered the vestibule, they were in prayer, and many negroes were waiting its cessation, to enter. One attracted my notice by an expression of great religious feeling, and a devotional attitude, which exceeded any statue or design of a devotee. He appeared so completely engrossed that his soul seemed to have melted in love and praise. His posture expressed meekness and supplication, as he cried in ecstatic tones,—“My God! My God!” As the prayer ceased, there was a burst of music and hallelujah, in the good old-fashioned Methodist hymns, that make one cry and laugh too, sung with such expression of full joy and glory as I never heard before. The tears unbidden trickled down my cheeks. I never witnessed a more

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devout and true manifestation of religious feeling. The sermon, which was delivered by a white minister, was earnest and simple—yes, eloquent. The whole congregation was well dressed, and presented about as stylish an appearance as most of our Northern churches would. Many of the 249 black women wear a handkerchief, mostly white, tied around the head, which resembles a turban, and is far more becoming to them than a bonnet. Most of the negroes here are well clad, and appear well fed and happy. What shall I conclude? that there is whipping and starvation behind the scene? I believe there is no people, not even the Africans, with their joyous, careless nature, that can spring up into their native joyousness when abused and trampled down. I do not suppose that there are not many instances of abuse of the slave in different places and positions; it cannot be otherwise, where unbounded power is licensed. But this power is not generally felt and practised on the slave; and when I see happy looking slaves and happy children, I shall decide that they are happy; for they have no reasons for concealment, but both reflect their spirits. I am daily brought into conversation upon the subject of slavery, which I never evade, but plainly express what I really think, which is permitted without suspicion. I see in part with the South. They understand better their own position and the slaves', than it can be seen by those who are mere lookers on. They are, unquestionably, better masters than Northerners. This lenity may not arise from the virtue of forbearance, or entirely from the conscientious desire to do right, but a love they bear them from the associations of being reared together. There is but little of that commanding tone and manner exhibited towards the slave in demanding his services. I have observed that when any importance is manifested, because of the position of master, it is usually by Northerners, and they naturally possess the tyrannical spirit—the disposition to drive every thing ahead, and the climate creates and fosters it. But in time they become acclimated, and rule with less rigor.

The more I see of mankind, I remark that the masses are not leaders; they rather lean on others, and where the climate 11\* 250 is mild and warm, there is less of that arbitrary ruling, economizing spirit; and where life is so easily supported, so little physical labor is required to sustain it, that the inhabitants present but few rough edges of character, and

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more love of the harmonious and beautiful. One is not aroused so continually by the cry for a change as a reform. I do not feel that I must stand ready to battle, as a wrong, every object or being that comes with different views and creed. This may be the true life, but I must confess I enjoy the change that lets the nerves become quiet and the body fat. The South gives one time to live, sleep all night sweetly, fanned by soft breezes, and spend the day in social entertainment, and seems to promote a richer growth of the social feelings than the North.

We are not served here more than at a boarding-house North, nor have I discovered that there is more service exacted of the slaves than of our servants, and they take what they have to do with twice the ease; which may account for the careless housekeeping here. The manner of cooking seems laborious. It is done by an open fire on the hearth. I have been told by the slaves that they greatly prefer this to stoves, as in their inexperience, they burn themselves, and conclude they are black ugly things. There are few conveniences adopted to lessen and expedite labor. It would be difficult to introduce any to advantage among the negroes. They have no spirit of improvement and change; and besides, the largest portion of them are too ignorant to do any thing out of their accustomed way. A lady at Richmond, who had all the modern improvements in her house, told me it did not help the condition of her servants or her housekeeping, they were so clumsy in learning to use them, and it seemed really to pain them to do any thing out of the usual way. It must be a free people, and those that do their own work, that invent means for expediting labor.

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I am very much interested in the market here. It furnishes most delicious berries and fruits for a trifling sum. Every morning I take a good-sized paper box (I rather think it has been a match-box, for several friends I meet ask me if I have matches to sell), and trudge off to market, like many of the ladies; but I always carry home my own purchases that I may eat on the way. Did you ever hear of young ladies eating along the street? I suppose Madam Etiquette would say a lady would not do it; but that little-headed and small quizzing-eyed creature don't know much. Besides, how could I wait, with such tempting fruits in my

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possession? Then, for self-defence, I have to tell my mate how much I have eaten, for she eagerly looks in the box, saying, "Is that all you have? You have eaten them half up;" and always supposes her share is more than it really is, because I have eaten a few, as she is no judge of pints and quarts. But she is younger, and has her own way, like all humored ones. My companion is not so much attached to the market; and the chief interest with me is the marketing people, who are mostly from the country. At daylight one can see them coming into town in large heavy carts, drawn by the veriest bit of a mule. At first, I felt pity to see the animal drawing such a large cart and load, but I have learned that they make up a want of size in strength and toughness. They perfectly personate stubbornness in their long, pointed ears, that stand up so conspicuously, and narrow, meagre head. It is said, if a Yankee should try to drive them, they would do nothing but back; but I suppose the Yankee would always manage to have them back the right way. There is a monstrous-sized black woman that drives in a wee mule attached to a large cart, with a board across the box for the seat. The harness is little more than fill-strap and girdle, with reins of the smallest-sized rope, which have been broken and tied until they look too fragile to guide a more manageable animal. There is little intelligence or spirit among the white market-women; many come several miles, with a few berries or whatever else they can furnish, who, if they counted the cost, and estimated their own labor as any thing, might better stay at home and eat them themselves. Their poultry seem equally as lifeless—lie huddled together fast asleep, as if accustomed to the scene and place, and resigned to being laid on the beheading-block and served up for mortal man. If some of our long-legged poultry should find themselves in such a predicament, they would look a surprised indignation, and stalk off at a rapid rate. The animals South exhibit but little activity or spirit; all are sleepy and quiet, with the exception of the dog; that is particularly ferocious and quarrelsome, which may perhaps be attributed to a peculiarity of their constitution, the effect of the climate, or high living. I am inclined to think that they need to be restricted in animal food, and put on a low diet, which is asserted by vegetarians to cool the passions of both man and beast.

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I have never felt any fear of ghosts or apparitions, witches or wizards, in or out of the flesh, since my childhood; but when awakened by the horrid dog-fights here, as night is the time of their revels, I tremble with alarm—the blood seems to stop in its course, and freeze in my veins—as the hideous howls and yelps take one in imagination to the very gate of the infernal regions. The citizens are also sometimes disturbed, and in some of the biggest battles, a shot is heard. One just gets out “g-o-od,” when all is hushed but a shriek and yelp that exceeds in horror all the others combined, and one shrinks trembling into the sheets, uttering sob-like groans—a wound has been inflicted that its maddened spirit cannot resist or repay. I should denounce the dog kind as the lowest of living brutes, had I not known 253 and petted a higher species. If a low diet would subdue their savageness, I would plead for the enactment of a law that would enforce the reform.

Horses and dogs, among the domestic animals, were my decided favorites; but here I feel repulsed at the sight of the one, and the other exhibits none of the grandeur of the Northern steeds, that often defy the skill and strength of their master, and one can't help clasping their hands and exclaiming, How grand! how noble! even when the lofty creatures have thrown their rider, or are bounding off, restrained only by being attached to the costly carriage of their proud owner. I should be delighted to see something run away, if only a mule, and to hear of the final exit of all the dogs would be cheering; for I wish so kind a people to be blessed with a better species of the canine race.

There are many professional men South, at least as far as we have been. Wealthy gentlemen's sons study a profession, have an office, get practice, if they can; if not, live on their money. But there is a good deal of the Yankee among many, when necessity pushes them. If one thing don't succeed, they try another. Thus we have found in the different cities of Virginia, a doctor or lawyer occupying the position of salesman or schoolmaster; an exhorting minister becomes a cobbling jeweller; a low, dishonest man puts on broadcloth, is partner in a druggist store, gives liberally to the wealthy public both in smiles and money, and is pronounced by the short-sighted and favored, “a generous

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fellow;" while the poor cry out, but are not heard, of his low, mean trickery—of his efforts to cheat them of their hard earnings; subscribes for what he does not desire, to go with the popular rush; and when the subscription is due, aims to evade its payment. The light-haired, rosy-cheeked, and baby-faced merchant, who dresses his ninny wife in satins, sends the pay for his book, with a word that he must 254 have it twenty-five cents cheaper than the usual price. A father whose fiendish passions send forth a quickness of monkey intellect, but not vivid enough to enable him to distinguish the virtuous and elevated from low-born souls like his own; yet, like all animals, he possesses the instinct of self-sustenance and preservation, and imitating others of his species, has used it in amassing a fortune, though in its accumulation, like all carnivorous brutes of great physical force, devours the weaker and smaller of his kind, to satisfy his ravenous appetite. In your last, you ask if we find only good; and I have thrown in these instances as the worst we have found in a business that brings us in contact with all classes; and despite these few instances, we conclude that the world contains vastly more good than evil.

The book merchants usually treat us as rivals in the business; exhibit a lively interest in our having a license, telling us the great danger to which we are exposed by not having one, and that the cost and trouble of getting it quite equals the gain of selling books. We express our gratitude for such disinterestedness, by leaving them blissfully ignorant of our knowledge and security, which they obtain by informing the license commissioner of our trespassing. None here have manifested a like care, but a really agreeable gentleman in the business, has extended to us real friendliness.

### LETTER XLVII.

Portsmouth, Va.

I am at Portsmouth, and, as I told you I should, I have been taking a survey of the place, to see how it will compare with Norfolk. It has a fresher and fairer look, more regular features, more symmetrical form, but it has less solidity, 255 and is decidedly inferior to its neighbor

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across the ferry, in a certain expression of refinement and finish—an expression that comes not by gift, but is only acquired by real cultivation of mind and taste. But there is a good deal of enterprise here. The women seem to have something to do besides sitting up to be looked at; and, as a sign of their growing independence, I am told they do, some of them, venture out in the evening without a “protector,” which certainly speaks a good deal for them, since it is so contrary to established customs. Two or three of the ladies that I have seen since coming here pleased me very much. Perhaps I merely happened to call on some of the finest representatives, but whether I did or not, the few that I saw had more vivacity and animation than most of the ladies I have seen hitherto, and at the same time just as much ease. And this is very easily accounted for. This is more like a village than any of the other places we have visited, and there is the freedom, industry, and independence of a village; and the ladies, from their greater activity, escape the listlessness of appearance that accompanies idleness.

The larger portion of the town is in the Navy-Yard; that is, a great many of the men who live here are in some way employed there during the day, so that at first one is surprised at the small amount of business in comparison with the number of houses. The one paper that is published, gave us an excellent notice, and for the first few days we canvassed here, but we soon finished, and have since been at Gosport, in the Navy-Yard. I believe it is contrary to the usual custom to admit any pedlers, whether of books or other things, into the Navy-Yard, lest some of the time that belongs to Uncle Sam be wasted; but we applied to the Commandant, assured him that we should be no hindrance, that those to whom we were talking always went on with their work, and used all the arguments we could think of to obtain his permission. 256 He heard us incredulously, said we should waste our time and get no subscribers, and finally sent us to the Captain, who, from the fact of our being ladies, made no hesitation in saying we might go. We have had unparalleled success in our work, notwithstanding the prognostications of the Commandant, and found a good deal of genuine manliness among the mechanics employed there. We supply them with books of every description, oftentimes something that treats on their particular

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branch, and nowhere have we found men who have exhibited more care and intelligence in the selection. Besides, it is pleasant to meet these, for we hear less of the extravagant and nonsensical flattery which is so much offered by others, and of which, as you may suppose, we are sometimes heartily weary. While these are equally as civil, and in every way as gentlemanly, they have more earnestness and truthfulness of manner, and treat us more like sensible young women.

Many that we meet in our journeyings, from our easy, cheerful manners, conclude that we are only amusing ourselves, and that our business is mere girls' play. Others give us credit for wonderful energy and perseverance, that we could commence and continue such an undertaking; while others still see it as it is, that we embarked from a desire to be independent, and to see something of the world, and of the life that goes on outside our own narrow circle, and that it requires not so much perseverance or fortitude, when we find in all places so many excellent friends. We have no opposition, and few discouragements to battle against, and if we sometimes find ourselves a little gloomy or disheartened, we can remain at home, a privilege we know well how to appreciate, having felt, what so many feel, the irksomeness of being obliged every day to drag through the same dull task, no matter how much the whole soul shrunk from it. At present, the greatest inconvenience we experience is from the 257 heat, as the Navy-Yard is at some distance from our boarding house, and by coming home at mid-day we have the full power of the sun.

I have not yet found a Topsy for you, and I begin to fear I shall not; indeed, I am half convinced that such a character lives only in fiction. But there is an overgrown black girl near us who is quite a curiosity—the romp of the neighborhood, and mischievous enough, they say, to annoy all around her. We first saw her driving about the streets with a large wheelbarrow, so we engaged her to take a box of books up to the Navy-Yard for us, as we like to encourage and employ our own sex when it is possible. You can scarcely imagine a more comical figure than she cut as she paced along shoeless and bonnetless, managing her broad, elephant-like feet so dexterously, that at each step she exhibited the whole under side of them, and moving with such perfect independence and indifference, that one



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would have supposed her the last woman. At a motion from us for her to stop, for with her burden she quite outwalked us, she would set herself down, wait till we came up, and with a grin start on again. I thought her a good example of a strong-minded woman, as some very wise people understand the term, people who think that woman wishes to take man's place; and if every woman could fill the place she attempted to as well as this one did, the question might be decided at once, for she seemed entirely at home in her masculine employment, and to fill the position with the utmost ease, fully enjoying her own strength.

I have just returned from Norfolk, where I have been to carry a book. The gentleman who subscribed for it was engaged when I called, so he sent his sister to receive and pay for it. The young lady entered the parlor where I was waiting, evidently thinking she was only to meet a pedler, for her snub nose was doing its best to express scorn. But it was all in vain—snub noses will be snub noses, however much we may try to give them expression. She gave me a kind of staring nod, and sat down, taking the book I handed her with a somewhat pettish jerk, and at the same time remarking, “It is probably some abolitionist stuff.” I told her I had not read the book, but as it was written by a Southern lady, I presumed she need have no fears of the doctrines it contained. Whereupon she branched off into a dissertation upon the North and South, and ended by saying it was quite beneath the South to say any thing in support of her peculiar institution, that she ought rather to preserve a dignified silence; that the North wrote popular books about them, and that the South, in return, wrote books that were not so popular, because mostly written by inferior writers, and thus matters were made worse, and the only thing proper for the South was silence—dignified silence. Poor thing! I was tempted to help her, she made such poor arguments in favor of the side she was trying to take. But I said very little, contenting myself with the hope that she would read the book that I had sold her brother, and thus get a better idea of Southern literature, and speak more hopefully of the authors of her own section. But I assure you I was highly amused to see the disdain the young lady tried to exhibit, lips and nose seemed to vie with each other, the one curling, though most ungracefully, and the other turning up just as much as it could. Finally, after saying a great

many things that she thought very wise, and I very silly, she reluctantly brought forth the money from her pocket, and handed it to me, evidently thinking her brother would have invested it much better in a "new frock" for her. But it is strange the girl hasn't learned that haughtiness and disdain don't become her style of beauty. If one is going to put on airs, they should at least endeavor to adopt those best suited to them. The best imitation is poor and mean enough, when compared with nature, and when all out of place and character, it is glaringly ridiculous.

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But there is one thing in which women, and especially young women, show the limits of their sense and politeness oftener than in any other, and that is in the treatment of those whom they consider beneath them. How few are equally civil and courteous to all. I must say I have never known more than a half dozen of ladies, who, in all positions, acquitted themselves as ladies, who exhibited none of that foolish fear of compromising their dignity, or of being deserted by it, but were always self-possessed, and at their ease. We have had one or two instances of the care that is taken to preserve the lady-like character in ladies that we have met in the street, after having seen them at their homes. It is quite laughable to see what haste they make to turn their heads before we can have time to recognize them. But such persons are quite right; they should be careful, for their gentility has such a slight basis, that it might be easily overturned, and then they would be only common! I don't think it is generally believed, that a true lady should treat all with equal courtesy; for, if it was, there would be a little more practice of the belief.

## LETTER XLVIII.

Raleigh, N. C.

I was awakened this morning, dear M—, by the singing of birds, and looking out of my window, I thought I must have been transferred to Paradise during my slumbers, so beautiful was the scene. We arrived here in the evening, and, tired and dusty as we then

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were, the place seemed any thing but Paradisiacal. Indeed, we scarcely looked or cared where we were; it sufficed for us to know that we were freed from the hot, suffocating cars, and lodged in a comfortable room. But what a change of scenery! As I looked 260 around me this morning I was delighted, and in the joy of the moment I said, "Let me live at Raleigh for ever. Yes; I could dwell here, and be contented." I have lost some of my enthusiasm now, because it is so intolerably warm, and because there seems to me to be such a want of life among the people—so little business, and such moderation in all things. This would be a charming place of abode, if it was near some large city, so that one could go into the world quickly when they wished, for of itself it seems only a little village nestled in the woods.

We are stopping at a hotel situated on one side of the square that surrounds the Capitol, and the view from our windows is delightful. We look into what seems to be a native grove, for there is none of the order that is usually found in parks, all the trees growing in lines. No; these seem to have been allowed to remain just as they sprang up. In short, it looks like a small grove entirely in its native state, excepting that enough of the trees have been felled to make room for the beautiful Capitol placed in their midst, and raising its lofty dome above their heads. It is said that, with one exception, this Capitol, in architectural beauty, surpasses all the others in the Union. It is built, I believe, in the style of the Parthenon at Athens, and is truly an admirable edifice.

The streets are broad, and many of them lined with trees. The principal one has at its head the Capitol, and at the foot the Governor's house, and viewed from either end has a fine appearance; but as you pass through you wish there was a little more noise and confusion—more activity. The quiet is oppressive, because you are not in a solitude, you are surrounded by signs of population; therefore you feel the need of the hum incident to life, just as much as in the fields and groves you want that of birds and insects, and waving trees. But how can I expect them to move, or make any sound other 261 than that produced by panting, such weather as this? The heat is insufferable. I have been walking around to-day, because the place was new to me, and I wished to see something

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of it; and, besides, I have still a little of the Northern *vim* that has sustained me under this melting sun, but I fear every day that it will be exhausted, and I shall sink under it, therefore I shall come North now as soon as possible.

I brought with me here a letter of introduction to the Mayor; but I shall certainly not trouble him with it, unless it rains, or something makes the air cooler. It would seem downright impertinence in me to obtrude myself on the presence of that gentleman now, when I'm sure it is as much as he can do to breathe. One would think that, with so many trees, the heat would be more endurable; but there is no wind, not a leaf is stirred, they have lost all their freshness, their bright green hue, and merely give a little shelter by intercepting the rays of the sun. I wonder the very birds are not choked, and compelled to cease the song; but their warbling sounded as sweet and clear to me this morning as in early spring-time in my old New England home the first notes of the robin used to sound.

One thing we have to congratulate ourselves upon, and reconcile us to our sojourn here, and that is the comfortable quarters we are in. This is the most cleanly and most orderly house we have been in since we came South. Some have had more style, but where is the beauty of style, if every thing is dingy and untidy? The servants have a better appearance, and seem better cared for than those we have seen hitherto. Whether this improvement in households extends through North Carolina, and whether it excels Virginia in this respect, I do not know; but I do know that we have found no hotel or boarding-house so neat and comfortable as this.

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But I can write no more. I will leave this letter till to-morrow. I must stop writing and—fan myself.

My to-morrow has extended almost to a week, which I have spent in panting, sleeping, fanning, and wishing myself in some more Northern latitude. For two or three days we tried to sell our books; but nobody wanted any. The reading portion of community provide

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themselves from two excellent bookstores that they have, and the others were too much engaged in trying to keep cool to hear any arguments in favor of purchasing ours. And for myself, when I began to speak, the quiet was so deep that I was almost startled at the sound of my own voice, and consequently spoke with no ease or earnestness; and as all people are more or less affected by the mood and manner of the person addressing them, it is no marvel that I have had no success here. But if one is in active business, there is nothing like being in a business place. The papers here are weekly and semi-weekly,—no dailies; so we had no notices, as there were several published the day after we came, before we called on the editors, and we were not to remain long enough to have ourselves introduced in the next that would be issued, though two or three of the editorial corps politely offered to give us, or rather our mission, a place in their columns.

In my endeavors to sell books, one old gentleman to whom I offered them said he had no time to read. I then told him his wife might like something; but no—she was too old to read any thing but the Bible. And in reply to my saying I could sell him a Bible for her, he said, “No, she has one, I gave her a very good one some time ago.” I was amused at the old gentleman's words, expressing as they did the timely care he had taken for the spiritual welfare of his companion. I have no doubt that that “very good one” was his gift to her when they first embarked together 263 for the voyage of life; and perhaps having this treasure on board, had been as a charm to keep the sea smooth and preserve them from its perils when rough, for the old man seemed to be enjoying his gray hairs in quiet and peacefulness, undisturbed by any cares. Old age, when found with benevolence and contentment, is always to me beautiful and attractive—whether in man or woman. There is a purity, an appearance of having passed beyond the petty prejudices and envyings that so often sully youth, which always inspires respect and reverence. But there are comparatively few who don the gray garment of age, and wear it so gracefully. With too many it is assumed querulously and worn in bitterness of spirit, and is therefore repulsive.

I have been this evening upon the dome of the Capitol, from which I had an extensive view of the country around. Seen from this eminence, the city looks beautifully; the streets

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are so broad and regular, and there is such a wealth of green shrubbery; and certainly of all delightful rural abodes, some of those to be seen here are the most inviting. Several mornings before the sun was so high as to scorch me, I have been out exploring and admiring the pleasant residences that I have found in every direction. But the heat has not at all abated. The air is so thick and heavy that walking seems literally wading through some element of unusual density. My companion has had so much difficulty in breathing, especially nights, and with all our windows wide open, that I have been kept alive by laughing at her, having waked up several times and found her up and swinging the door furiously, trying to create a breeze, at the same time fanning herself with the other hand. She succeeded just about as well as the man who undertook to propel his boat by placing a huge bellows in one end. He found that he remained in the same place; and she found herself more exhausted by her efforts, and really no better off than before 264 She has positively used up two huge palm-leaf fans that we brought with us—only a few small fragments remaining—and all this that she might get breath; so you may imagine the state of the atmosphere.

Since we found we could sell no books here, we have been resting and waiting to have some rain. But it will not rain, and to-morrow we shall go back to Portsmouth. Whether we survive the heat and dust and reach our destination is doubtful. I didn't exactly like to come, and tried to persuade my friend to give it up, by telling her I had a presentiment of evil—I was sure we should be either dead or married before we returned. Which calamity would befall us I did not know, but I was sure one of them. Still, after hearing all my solemn premonitions—still she persisted in thinking it best to come; and to confess the truth, I at last felt myself a little curiosity to see if the period had really arrived for either of these two events—which, after our birth, seem to be the two most important of our lives, and I suspect this thought must have influenced me considerably; for, certain it is, I consented to come more willingly, and yielded my wishes and will with a better grace than I am wont to do; and I see no other reason for it than this. Neither of the events foretold have yet taken

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place, therefore I feel particularly anxious to know what the morrow will bring forth, fearing that my prophecies will have even less weight here-after than they did in this instance.

But I must leave writing for that most disagreeable of all operations, packing. The only way I can tolerate it is, to let it stare me in the face till the eleventh hour, and then, when it can no longer be evaded, face it with as much courage as I can summon. We are not cumbered with much garniture for ourselves—one trunk contains all that we brought here—but then there is a large box of books, very few of which have been distributed, but all disturbed, and so must 265 be repacked—and the eleventh hour hath come. For the present, adieu! May favoring steam waft us safely back to Portsmouth.

P. S.—I left my letter that I might tell you if I arrived here safely. Yesterday, at this time, I concluded that my hour had come, that my presentiment was to be realized, and that I was to perish by suffocation. Verbally, I made my last will and testament, bequeathing all my worldly effects to my companion; and, in case neither should survive, we concluded that our property would be confiscated and go to enrich the State. Having thus arranged my affairs, I tried calmly to await my doom; but tranquillity was impossible. The heat was excessive. It fully realized my idea of the heat of the tropics; for at Weldon, where we changed, as I walked from the cars to the hotel, the earth seemed to scald my feet. The cars were constantly filled with dust so that we could not see each other with any distinctness, and what rendered the ride more intolerable, I had no one to fret and fidget with me, for my companion was so engaged reading, that she was quite lost to present ills—and if I did rouse her occasionally to a sense of them, she would soon return to her book with an air of most provoking unconsciousness and indifference, leaving me to entertain myself as I best could. At last I tried to read myself. I had essays, poetry, and fiction—a great variety, for we always take a box full into the cars with us for our own pleasure and the benefit of the passengers—(Are we not benevolent?) But read? No. I had to wet a towel we had provided ourselves with, having had a foretaste of this when we went to Raleigh; I had to wet this towel whenever we stopped, and clear the dust from my eyes, in order to preserve any kind of vision. How could I read? How she got along so nicely I don't

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know, but I suspect her lashes performed their office of protectors, 12 266 more faithfully than mine; for there she sat in perfect content, apparently, while I was moving all ways to find a comfortable position. But by a miracle, I lived through the journey, though I think the escape so narrow that my presentiment had some reason in it. It was probably owing to some unusual toughness in me that I was able to endure it.

It was some satisfaction when we reached Portsmouth, to find that my mate was as uncomfortable as I, now that she was fairly brought out of dream-land. With the yellow dust and black cinders ground into our faces, we looked like a strange race of beings, half Indian and half African—and lest our friends would not recognize, and therefore would refuse to receive us, we sent our baggage to our boarding-house and betook ourselves to a bath, which, be assured, was most grateful. We came from the bath better looking and better natured, and were happy as two children to get back here into our cosy little room, where we can breathe without swinging the door or fanning incessantly, for the sea-breezes come up here and make it quite comfortable towards evening; but Raleigh is an inland place and has no such refreshment.

### LETTER XLIX.

Portsmouth, Va.

To-day is the great anniversary of our independence—the Fourth of July. Allowing inclination to judge, I shall best display my patriotism by writing you, and my obligations too, I think I hear you chime in. Yes, I feel the smittings of conscience for such neglect. You are a little jealous, hey! that my mate receives more than her due of my regard and love. Our hostess the other day remarked, with an expression of surety, as if she had given an axiom of nature, that “Whoever loves is jealous.” With this assertion and 267 your suspicions I feel flattered, and understand the pleasure that husbands feel from the jealousy of their wives, and *vice versa*, as another evidence of affection. You conclude we are getting acclimated; yes, and citizenized too. The process of acclimating, for the past



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month, has been rather severe, from the extreme hot weather, and it is said, as it always is, of any excess, "the like was never known before;" and this season is pronounced the hottest ever known, which we, from our experience, respond to in all truthfulness. We are so thoroughly warmed, that we remember cold weather as a pleasant dream, and wish it could come as a reality. The heat is not only excessive, but for more than two months we have not had rain enough to wet the earth.

The Fourth is not celebrated here; but it is a general holiday with the colored people, who are dressed in their best suit, their Sunday prime, and promenade the main streets. They give themselves such airs, that one might safely conclude that the order of things had been reversed, and that they were the masters, and national representatives of unbounded freedom. Happy souls! if they feel keenly their bondage, and yet can spring from the thralldom in a moment so full of easy gladness, Many of the slaves have gone to Old Point, eighteen miles distant, where the Fourth is always celebrated. We were awakened this morning by the national salute. The ball of freedom sent forth to echo the note of liberty, struck me as being equally as strong a representative of the sentiment it is the ceremonial of, as it has for years. It has somehow lost its power to fill me with such glowing ardor and faith in my country's independence. Freedom is an infant with guileless soul, robbed of its natural heritage, and its birthright sold for a mess of pottage. I am glad it is Independence day, for it is an old saying at the North, that it always rains on that day, or the night following; and no matter whether it is the saying South or 268 not, if it is only verified. Black, ominous clouds have darkened the earth all day, with occasionally a flash of lightning, followed by heavy thunder, and now it rains; yes, pours down in torrents. Hurrah! A toast! "Freedom to the parched and thirsty earth!" (Cheering.) A welcome arises in every heart, and the whole household are crying Good! but the thoughtful E—, the eldest, has silenced our warmest exclamations and welcomes of the blessing, by drawing the sad picture of hapless young ladies, whose fine and gay feathers will be drenched with rain, without possessing the power of being brushed and revived again.

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For a week past, a report has been circulated that the negroes are going to make an insurrection to-day. How well-founded or wide-spread the assertion I have not yet learned. I have only heard the speculations of the family, and witnessed the fears of the younger portion of the brood who are obliged to depend on the others for safety. We have not raised any battery for defence. Once, we should have expected our security was insured, by crying out, "I am a Northern citizen;" but I fear now, since it is a decided fact that the Northerner is the most arbitrary slaveholder, that the negroes would receive that plea as the shark did the entreaties of the little fish, that cried for life on the score of their youth and innocence; to which the shark replied, "Yes, but you will grow large and powerful, and, like your fathers, devour us." As yet we are resting on our non-resistant principles, and I have done my best to comfort and convert the trembling eldest to its glorious truths, as the natural protective given man when attacked by wild beasts or brother man. I trust we shall be sustained by its philosophy until we are brought to the actual practice of the theory. And farther I'll not attest to our reliance on the doctrine, for it seems so much the necessity of nature, when smitten on one cheek, to return a like act, as a means of defence. You shall hear to-morrow, if I am not among the slain, the ground of our fears, which arise mostly from sympathy with others.

Portsmouth is a smaller city than Norfolk, and on the opposite side of Elizabeth River, which is ferried by two small boats, that dart to and fro like arrows. From the remarks of each city of the other, and my knowledge of both, I liken them to an elder and younger sister. One has advanced age and popularity, with a dignity that always accompanies a large and well-proportioned form, and strikes one as the possessor of worth and importance, but which may prove, after all, to be but the common and bulky, with a degree of refinement and finish. But the younger sister, when compared, lacks in completeness of style and finish, but presents a livelier simplicity of manner, and a rosier hue, that quite takes the heart, because of its naturalness, rather than admiration of her finishedness. On further acquaintance with this younger sister, Portsmouth, we find that she possesses some of those strong points of character which shine most in perilous times, when the

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enemy assaults, or when sudden flight is the resource. In its environs is the largest navy-yard in the United States, and the old ship *Pennsylvania*, heavily armed, stands where it was first anchored, a few rods from the shore. At the other end of the city is a delightful grove, that extends to the Naval Hospital, a fine building, which with its grounds, strikes one as really lovely and grand, when seen as one approaches the city by water. Also there are two railroads leading from the city, and the depots are stationed here. The streets are pleasantly laid out, but if many of the cottage-like homes were arranged with a front yard, instead of opening directly on to the street, it would have added decidedly to its beauty, and given it an appearance of independence. It really does one's heart good to find a spot of so much active industry, as here, among the larger portion of the inhabitants. Women occasionally tend 270 shop, and the Navy-Yard is filled with men employed in different mechanical pursuits, and really the most of the Portsmouth men are found there during the day. We besieged both the Commandant and Captain for admittance, a favor which is not granted in common cases, not being expedient for the interests of Uncle Sam. The Commandant, true to his Yankee nature, threw off the responsibility by sending us to the Captain, to whom we presented our case. As he had so often combated with greater powers, he looked on us as too innocent and harmless to break a tittle of the law, therefore he gave us a pass, and we went in with good faith, although the Commandant had assured us that we should only waste our time, and get no subscribers; but as we are nearly through, we wonder if the publisher will have books enough to supply so many, and whether God has marked the mechanic with a larger nature, and blessed him with a higher degree of nobility; or has so much intelligence, and self-culture of heart and head, come from manual labor?

This city, at evening, resounds with the merriment of play-children, which reminds me that it has not been the case in other cities. Their happy, laughing voices bring home associations and the careless freedom of our childhood. From what I have seen and heard, mothers here generally endeavor to heed the sacred injunction, "Parents, bring up your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord," although they may lack in

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a philosophical application of the injunction. A father, with whom I was conversing, said: "Our mothers commence educating their children in conservatism in infancy, and suppress all natural desire, which springs up with childhood, to seek adventure;" and the standard of the child's act is each mother's idea of propriety. If that propriety had its origin in knowledge and nature, it would aid and strengthen a love of expedition, and yet give sensible views of how far it could be carried. But propriety 271 that has its birth in the despotism of fashion, has but one strong point. It deadens all genius and love of adventure, and the subject is merely a being who lives, breathes, and dies. If life is more than an animal existence, and is attended with holier aspirations, who shall cramp these energies, or eke them out in little proprieties?

I must take up my old theme again—boarding-houses. What! you thought I was going to be more charitable? Yes, I know it reads beautifully—"Charity suffereth long and is kind; is not easily provoked." When this is applied with reason as its guide, I am ready to admit its heavenly truth; but when applied to an error, an evil, that is personal and admits of a remedy, requiring only exertion to root it out, such an application of charity I will cast aside as a humbug. For the first few days we always live on the "top shelf," which is one point of bad logic. Do they not know that the fastidious appetite marks quickly the change, and rebels, asking the combativeness for redress? Our boarding-house here was recommended in the highest terms, and the first appearance was flattering; and one hopefully said to the other, as we entered the well-furnished parlor, which always looks pleasant—This is quite home-like. But you know housekeepers get weary of effort, of seeing that every thing is in its place, and declare there is no end to it, and are discouraged in wearing their lives out in minutiae. At times every act falls into insignificance; and what matters it if the necessity of eating is attended to with less care? We conclude our hostess often soliloquizes thus, from the ups and downs attending her domestic administration. And is it not a licensed custom of society, to have the parlor decorated and finely furnished, if the dining-room is meagre in its comforts, the table disordered, and with such a limited number of dishes that if all the boarders are present

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together, the good madam wonders “where all my dishes are gone;” 272 and when a member comes after the usual hour, the cup that has been used once is quietly filled and used a second time, without any extra washing. If one has a parlor, of course they must dress, even if the bedquilts have the dilapidated aspect of having been made by their more industrious grandmothers.

We hear it so often said of such a man or woman, they are so good, so amiable, so agreeable! In my younger days, I sought the acquaintance of such persons, with much earnestness and faith in finding the reality; but I have concluded that an absence of absolute wrong is not a good, a right. It strikes me that to be really good, a use of the intellect is required; that one must think, compare, and judge, to act justly, and receive the high encomium— *good*. Thus it is with our hostess; she is admired for her amiability, “she is so good?” And yet her servants are continually confused and angered, by a want of punctuality in arrangements, that must devolve on the mistress, and of planning the household operations so that all will meet in harmony. We have been here so long that we have become quite wonted to the changes, which are sometimes in favor of the comfortable and agreeable, and find ourselves interested in the entire family. The mother is a widow. The son, a substantial young man, labors in the foundry. The eldest daughter, a fair girl of seventeen, is very pretty, yes, called beautiful—a great misfortune, for now she is bound to make a great match, and educated accordingly, to fit her for the market. She don't know how to do any kind of useful work, is not expected to care for her own wardrobe, rises in the morning at a fashionable hour, breakfasts as if it afforded her but little enjoyment, sits back and folds her hands, and the same is done at noon and evening. She dances, and embroiders sometimes, for these are fashionable; and did play the guitar, but had not spirit enough to make herself proficient. 273 She has fear of every obstacle that lies in her way, and is really a coward. Her trembling spirit needs to be hushed as we would a frightened child. From actual fear, she has not been across the river to Norfolk for years. She has a pleasant disposition, quiet, agreeable manners, and without the least pretence. If some pitying angel smooths the rugged path of life, and leads her where love

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lives unselfishly and uncorrupted, enough. But as chance seldom falls in the balance of good, she may in sorrow go to the highest bidder as an adorer of her helpless beauty. With such an education of her child, what can have been the mother's experience of life? Where is the elevated love that the thoughtful parent exhibits in care for the future well-being of her child? And look again at the folly of the act. Firstly, she is being fitted for the market, an expression that I am permitted to use from its frequent application here when speaking of marriage. Secondly, that preparation is—what? The eldest is a good example—incapability both of mind and body. Thirdly, what is the estimate made of such a being by those who seek them? At first a little instinctive love may be felt for one so helpless and harmlessly childlike, but in the great duties and responsibilities of this tragical life, a higher call is made, a need is felt for the “help-meet,” to share in its struggles. Few have the energy to rise above their habits and education. If the number was limited to a few, they might be tolerated, but our whole America is crowded with similar instances.

The youngest is yet in the juvenile dress, enjoying its independence, and having a character of her own. The boarders are agreeable men, engaged in divers occupations, and serving, like ourselves, to fill up some of the crevices in human life.

We have just returned from a trip to Raleigh. When business would not sanction a longer continuance in these 12\* 274 cities, and necessity bade us seek a new field for our labor, I decided it was best to go further South, and mentioned the subject to my mate, who was decidedly opposed to any further migration, and rhetorician-like, arranged all her arguments against it, giving the weaker ones first. She had not advanced far, when my lips lost their compression, and I was about to say, “Well, I don't think we had better go,” when she presented her last and most conclusive argument, that if we went, we should either die or marry before we should return. As I had no fear then of the former fate, and, at the same time, had sufficient confidence in my mate's presentiments to think that perhaps the latter might take place, as my own impressions corroborated hers, I was fully re-established in my desire to go. We went, and have returned without the fulfilment of either

prophecy, and with entire faithlessness in presentiments, though we were alarmed by continual fears of suffocation from dust and hot weather.

Raleigh seems like a bird's nest, with each bird and birdess caring well for their nest and nestlings. They fluttered and chirped at the approach of two Northern birds at this season, as out of the natural course of events, and betiding evil. We did nothing but try means to keep ourselves breathing through the insupportably hot weather, and when back here, we were alive and panting. Raleigh would afford a pleasant retreat from the noisy world, and a lovely spot for a home. It is so deeply imbedded in native woods, that each sound echoes as in a forest. I saw superb horses there that were as conscious of their importance as their owners were of their fine appearance. Their mode of travelling back into the country is by carriages and on horseback, as there is but one railroad, and that terminates there. We saw girls on horseback coming in with butter for the market, which carried us back to the days of simplicity, the olden times, of which our mothers have told us.

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We begin to yearn for our Northern home, to be among our own kin—to greet those whose associations are with our own. We give due to all the good we find here, which is not a little; but we are like an exile from his Northern home, who longs to lay his head upon a rock of ice. I leave here on the 7th, in the steamer “Roanoke,” for Richmond, from thence to Washington, and then home—home!

## LETTER L.

Portsmouth, Va.

Did you ever think of a soldier, dear M—, who, during the battle, when surrounded by all his comrades, had thought himself full of courage, and ready to have his valor put to any test? Not that he had ever performed any great feat. No, he had not; but somehow he felt wondrous strong, if any thing should overtake him, and consequently wore a bold face, and seemed to those around him a very brave warrior, and won golden opinions from all



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admirers of courage. You may imagine such a one; but did you ever think of him when by accident, or some peremptory circumstance, he was left alone in the field, his companions in arms all gone; see him look around to make himself more certain of his solitariness, and when he saw that it was true, tremble, turn pale, start fitfully, thinking that he saw an enemy approaching, and wish that he could flee or escape; but whither, whither could he go? And this is the soldier lately so brave. But it is not all cowardice now, though it looks very like it. No; be charitable. His timidity partly arises from the new situation in which he found himself. He has always had one faithful brother, if no more, and only the last necessity has parted them now; and the first sense of his loneliness alarmed him, from its very strangeness. This excuses part of his 276 fear; but then he isn't half as brave as he thought he was, when danger was afar off, and comrades were near. No; he is not so brave, that's plain. But in a little while he recovers his equanimity, by reflecting that the danger may be avoided, and that he will soon be in safety. So he gains courage, and by the time he is with his associates again, he will really have forgotten that he ever knew fear, and go on just as bravely as ever.

But what is all this about? you will say. I care not particularly for soldiers. What does it mean? Why, it means, my friend, that I am in the same plight in which I have pictured my poor soldier, and am experiencing all his emotions. My companion took the steamer for Richmond last evening, and from thence goes to Washington, and I am alone, and must wait here for three days, and then—then I leave for New-York. I preferred to wait a few days, and take a steamer direct, instead of going by the inland route, though, by so doing, I could have had my friend's company to Washington. But as I awoke this morning, with the full consciousness that she was gone—for I never can realize the absence of any friend for some time, and therefore never feel very sad at the time of parting—I felt very much like a coward, and almost wished I had gone with her. We have been so constantly together since I came, that, from association, it was impossible for me not to miss her very much; but to have such a curious feeling of being a stranger, in a strange city, was altogether unexpected. I have been watching my thoughts all day, and smiling at them.



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Very egotistical, I presume, you will say; but if I can be amused and entertained by my own thoughts, now that my (shall I say better? yes, I will) better half has gone—now I think she's better, and no matter what I think when she's with me—certainly, if I can pass my time so happily and innocently, it is my good fortune. But I wonder if I am really a coward, or 277 would any body feel the same in my position? I have thought I was brave enough till now. I shall not finish this letter to-day, for in that case I should have nothing to do to-morrow, for I do not leave until the day after, and all my packing, with my usual procrastination, I leave till the morning of that day.

There! I knew my fears, which were so indefinable yesterday, must have some meaning; and what do you think I have heard? Can you guess? I have heard several times that I am going to be married. Just think of it! I tremble! I know nothing about it, so how can I save myself? I cannot even find out who is to have that honor, and therefore cannot tell whether it will be mutual, since nobody knows whom I am to marry, but every body declares it is somebody. And I am the most ignorant of all. I am in the predicament of a man who expects to be assassinated, he knows not when, why, or by whom. Unfortunate young woman! Why did I not go with my companion? But tell me, did you ever know of such a case, as for a person to be married before they knew any thing about it? No matter if you never did. These are now times, and we cannot tell what a day may bring forth. Oh! why did I not go with my companion?

It is true, the prospect of having a husband is very cheering to young ladies usually, but one likes to know who he is to be, and this who he is to be is a subject of much speculation with them. Indeed, a lady in New-York, who ran away and married against her parents' wishes, gave me as her reason for so doing, that young ladies were always wondering and thinking whom they were to marry, and she thought it best to marry at once; and thus, by securing a husband, spare herself any further anxiety as to who he was to be, or when and where she was to meet him. Sensible reason for running 278 away!

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The subject must have weighed exceeding heavy on her mind, otherwise she would not have resorted to such desperate means of solution.

I wonder if people think, because my mate has left me, that we are never to meet again, and that I must forthwith have another. I shall let them know that she is to join me soon, and if she wasn't, that I don't transfer my affections with the facility that some seem to. But it is always so—the world is so officious. If a man buries his helpmate, his friends immediately begin to think who will supply her place, and soon find one that he accepts; while the friends of his first choice look mournfully at each other, shake their heads and lament such a want of respect for the memory of the departed. So goes the world. But my mate is not dead—only absent; and I have no idea of being false to her. Besides, I am too well satisfied to exchange her for any lord demanding submission, which you know I should not be likely to yield, and which they all expect, I believe.

Perhaps, after all, there is no truth in these reports, and they have only sprung up, either unaccountably or officiously, from my “unprotected” and lonely situation. I know such odd things are often heard in one's native town, among one's acquaintances; but who would ever suppose that people would busy themselves with the affairs matrimonial of a Yankee pedler. Really Madam Gossip must have found herself destitute of subjects—though, certes, such a thing never occurred to the active dame before, and may well be considered a wonder. But the most certain safety will be in flight, and to-morrow I'll fly; I only wish to-morrow were already here. In the mean time I'll keep my eyes wide open, and be on my guard, which is all I can do, since I know not from what quarter to expect the danger. May good genii guard me till I reach New-York.

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### LETTER LI.

New-York City.

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I suppose you have known people to be home-sick upon reaching home—haven't you? That is my condition. I believe New-York is my home, so at least I have considered it for the last few years, though I fancy it will never seem very home-like, even though I consider it so many years longer. Now it seems more dismal than ever. When in the streets, it is perfect Babel and Bedlam, and when at home a prison on the silent system; for I am in a large boarding-house, where every thing is conducted with so much order and quiet, that even at the table the most profound silence reigns, and one would conclude we were all dumb. At first I tried to break through this custom, as indeed the hostess said she wished I would, not liking quite so much quiet herself. But there is a little man who sits opposite me, who moves like a cat, and speaks as he moves, and the very tone of his voice, as he softly answers my remarks, sounds so stealthy, and so much as though he was doing something that he ought not to, that it has infected me, and now when I attempt to speak, my voice dies in my throat, and I am becoming as mute as the others. This habit is quite peculiar to boarding-houses. Instead of having some sociability at the table, which is so much pleasanter, and, I believe, is acknowledged to be healthier, each preserves a perfect silence, and eats, as though that was their business, and must have their undivided attention at the table, as much as stocks and trade, when at the counting-room. But this is a particularly noiseless collection, owing partly to the boarders, who are mostly quiet spirits, but more, as you may suppose, to the landlady herself, notwithstanding she wishes they would talk more. She is one of those precise, finished persons, who have no spontaneity, who always think before they speak, and, unconsciously to herself, she affects those around her. She cannot lead off in conversation, if she would, and without meaning it, she soon chills a sensitive person with her formality.

Most of my friends are in the country for the summer, but the few that are in town, I have called on, and have been considerably amused at their different expressions, as I told them what I have been doing. All were surprised, because they thought I was still quietly teaching in New Jersey. One of my acquaintances, a nice sentimental widow, wondered I had not found a husband; and said, with the utmost seriousness, "Why don't you say

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you are not travelling to sell books, but to get a husband? I should." I said, in reply, "probably I should, if that was my purpose." Poor, stricken one! Three mortal years has her first love been dead, and still she is mateless. Another, a good old lady, who does not accept a thing hastily, but looks well to the consequences, asked if I thought it "quite as respectable" as teaching; and after I had endeavored to give her some idea of the manner in which we were generally received, she looked rather doubtful, and said, "I am afraid your chance of marrying a gentleman of fortune isn't so good as it would be, if you were teaching. Men of business might receive you, and admit you upon an equality with them, but there are gentlemen having such delicate, sensitive feelings, that they cannot think of the least exposure for a woman. You might meet one who would be greatly attached to you, and yet these feelings of his would not permit him to marry one in such a business. I know them, for I have seen them at watering-places!" What a picture! Don't you suppose my courage waned as she drew it? But every one must accept their fate. The first question that is asked by society, when a young lady does any thing out of the ordinary way, is not whether it is sensible, proper, or right even, but whether it will affect her 281 "market." One would think, from the care that is taken to have every body marry, that old maids were supported by the public, whereas they are not, I believe, but are usually among the most useful members of society. Finally, my friend concluded that she, at least, liked my independence, and gave me a most cordial invitation to come and take tea with her, which I promised to do.

Those who know me best manifested but little surprise, as they expected me to do as I please, and know my distaste for teaching; and one young friend became quite enthusiastic to go with me, but she cannot; father and mother would both be shocked at the bare mention of it. They will not even permit her to teach, so she must content herself with being dressed and doing nothing. It is a pity those who desire it cannot make themselves useful, especially in a world where there is so much to be done. A very good commentary on the society, much, of it of New-York, was made a short time ago, by a friend from Boston, who had been spending a few weeks here, and by virtue of having

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some fashionable relations, was hurried to parties, dinner parties, and the places of amusement, till she was fairly tired out, and glad to go back to quiet Boston. In mentioning to me some of the peculiarities of New-York, she ended by saying, "Why, how they drink here—ladies and all;" and then told me of a large party she had attended the evening previous, where, with champagne and brandy, the gentlemen became drunk and the ladies silly. A fine phase of fashionable life! But so long as dissipation goes well dressed, it is all right. My friend, with her simple Boston habits, though accustomed at home to society that is sufficiently fashionable and frivolous, was amazed at the dress and manners of the ladies here, as she well might be.

It is as good as the play or the Crystal Palace, to go out occasionally on Broadway. No matter how long one has lived here, or how much they have been here, there is always something new, if one walks with eyes open. No one need die of *ennui* here. A few days ago, as I came down town, my attention was attracted by a gentleman in full dress, who with a hasty movement, as though he could not and would not hesitate any longer, whether he exhibited his vanity or not, drew a brush from his pocket, and gave his whiskers and moustache a vigorous brushing. Forgetting every thing but the ludicrousness of the picture, I laughed, whereupon the poor man reddened, as if caught in a crime, hastily concealed his brush, and hurried along. A chance for a new invention, whereby gentlemen can arrange their whiskers without having the act so apparent. The thing should be attended to. One comes to the conclusion, in passing along Broadway, that the only difference between the ladies in the street, and those ladies that turn round and round in the windows, is, that the first are not confined to circular motion, they have a little wider sphere of action than the last, but that both are chiefly valuable, as exhibitors of the fashions. The gentlemen, at least the young ones, seem to be matches for the ladies. They have an air of bustling importance, are very sleek, and have coats and hats of unexceptionable quality. I was amused this morning at a little incident that occurred, exhibiting as it did the politeness that these broadcloth men possess. It was very muddy, and, of course, unusually bad walking, though it is bad enough any time in this filthy city,

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but I had business, and was compelled to go out, though only a few blocks. Returning home, at a crossing, I took the inside, though it was my left, because it was the more passable, when I suddenly encountered a gentleman. He made no motion toward stepping out of my way, and we both stood still, I, unconsciously, rather expecting him to move, till I saw we were attracting some attention; and at the same time glancing down, I discovered 283 the secret of his persistence. It was his boots, polished to the last degree, and as he could not have stepped out without soiling them, he stoutly maintained his position. That so much labor might not be lost, and to spare the boots, I gave way, thinking my over-shoes might better be exposed than such boots! As my look signified what had decided me to yield, it occasioned no little amusement to some bystanders. I suppose the gentleman thought all ladies should stay at home, when the walking is bad, and could not afford to expend his politeness, when it required such a sacrifice.

### LETTER LII.

Boston.

You can scarcely imagine, dear S—, what emotions of pleasure thrilled me as I neared Boston. It seemed like going home; and that there is no place like home one feels with tenfold force, after trying many other places. It is so delightful to be with those who have known you from childhood, to meet again friends from whom you have been long enough separated for them to grow cold and altogether changed, and still be met by the same glad smile, and hear the same cordial welcome as of old. Assuredly old friends occupy a place in the heart to which new ones in vain seek admittance. There is a most agreeable feeling of security in regard to the former which one never has for the latter. We meet persons very frequently that we admire and esteem, and perhaps consider excellent friends; but it is a long time before they are firmly grounded, and on that even footing in their relation with us, where acquaintances of longer standing are found. They only know us partially, and there is a peculiar satisfaction in feeling that we are known thoroughly. Yes, to my friends I would be transparent; and 284 when they have seen my character as it is, both

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the good and bad that go to form it, and like me despite my faults, then I feel quite sure of them, and, as associates of childhood, do of necessity know me better than others, I prefer them. As for you and I, we have been so intimately connected, and have lived so entirely without conformity, that although we have known each other for so short a time, if we reckon by months, still we are as near as is possible, perhaps, on the fair footing of old friends.

I arrived here early this morning, and have been as happy as a child all day, and can scarcely now leave my friends long enough, or keep myself quiet enough to write even to you; though it is time my tongue had rest, for we have all been chattering like magpies ever since I came—so much to be heard and told, and so short a time for it all, as I only gave myself a fortnight for the visit—at the end of that time I shall be again with you.

Boston seems to me now as ever a most desirable place of residence. I will yield the palm to New-York for business, bustle and display; to Philadelphia for breadth and regularity; and to Boston for what is most important of all, its society. If one could but have this city, with its environs, and at the same time have the temperature of Philadelphia, it would be delightful beyond description. At this season of course one has no fault to find, but in the winter it is bleak and cold. The city is rapidly improving in appearance, from the new streets that are constantly being laid out in the southern part, and so broad and regular that strangers will have less cause to complain of the narrow and crooked streets, that are always brought up whenever there is any mention made of Boston. Two evenings in the week there is music on the Common, and to-night, as the Germanians were to play, I forgot my fatigue and went out. They have different bands, the best the city affords, and they 285 are paid from the public money. This is an admirable plan—worthy of Boston. Nothing has a better effect, and is of more real service than music; it so subdues the feelings and makes one harmonious with one's self. I have often thought, when at church, if they would but keep the organ playing, and omit the long prayers full of vain repetitions, and the prosy doctrinal sermons, the mass would be more benefited by church going. To-night there was a large number on the Common, and the good effect was apparent at

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once, in the uniform quiet that prevailed. I trust that other cities will follow this example, and have music in one or two of their principal parks; for by this means, many who have a love of music, can have it gratified occasionally, even though they have no dollar or half dollar with which to pay for it; and every such thing tends to improve the mass, and thereby lessen the number of criminals and outcasts.

I wanted you with me, dear S—, when I came here, to enjoy the care the captain took of the “unprotected” ladies on board. Certainly he will deserve to have a pension settled on him when he retires from service. When we were in Virginia, you remember, a conductor once expressed himself greatly surprised at the slight attention ladies at the North receive when travelling alone; but I wish the good man could have seen this captain. I think he would have acknowledged at once that the Southerners were outdone. I was alternately amused and impatient.

As we approached Fall River, where we were to leave the boat for the cars, you should have seen him rally us all to one spot, and charge and recharge us to stay *there* till he came to “take” us, as though we could not step from the boat to the cars without having the way marked out, and being led step by step. But we all demurely kept our places, and waited till our leader came; and to give you a perfect picture of us, hurrying along from the boat to the cars, you must fancy a hen with an immense brood of chickens, when there is danger near. The captain went first, with a lady on each arm, and we chickens hurried after, keeping up as well as we could, and all having our eyes steadily fixed on the foremost trio; while the captain every once in a while looked back over either shoulder, to see that none of us fell by the way or lost ourselves. But after all his hurry and exertion, which was entirely unnecessary, for we could have gone quietly by ourselves exactly as well, we were seated in the cars some time before they started. No sooner was I fairly seated, than my companion began to extol the captain for his great politeness. I knew if I dissented, I should only puzzle and disgust her with my strong-mindedness, so I laughed in my—bonnet, and demurely replied, that he was very attentive. Whenever there is the least need of or occasion for it, I like such kindness and care, but to have so much ado



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about nothing, is simply annoying. As, however, the other ladies didn't seem to consider it so, I think I must be strong-minded and masculine, and lack the helplessness becoming my sex; though I could have endured the act itself, and not made the least objection, if there had not been so many repetitions of, "There—stay there—wait there till I come." But it was all so kindly intended that I felt no inclination to say I thought it needless.

I have neglected every day to finish this letter, till more than a week has passed, which I have spent in taking a peep at my friends, and saying good-bye again; for I spend no time with any but A—, as she is an invalid, and the one that I came expressly to visit, and a part in visiting one or two public places. One day soon after I came, I made one of a party of six who went out on a blackberrying excursion. We had a merry time; rode out ten miles into the country, and then walked about half a mile to the berry field, where, preparatory to commencing our labors, we seated ourselves on the grass under a fine, shady old tree, and partook of the generous lunch the leader of our party had provided. From our easy, lawless appearance, we might have passed very well for a group of gypsies. Having finished our repast, we equipped ourselves for picking, and commenced. But the bushes were too high and the thorns too sharp for us, so after getting two or three good scratches, in spite of gloves and sleeves, we returned to the old tree, and left the gentlemen of the party to get the berries. But they didn't relish briars much more than we; so, after filling one of our large baskets, we returned home, somewhat scorched and scratched, and very tired, but well pleased with the jaunt, nevertheless. It is really a luxury, and does one good, to be thoroughly tired out occasionally; and I would recommend to those fashionable women whom we sometimes hear complaining of dulness, and sighing for a sensation, for a change—I would recommend them to engage in some active employment till they are well wearied; and if they do that I will insure to them better spirits, a change and a new sensation. We never fully appreciate the deliciousness of repose till it comes to us some time when our physical strength is well nigh exhausted. We must have contrast. We never realize the charms of the country till we have been for a time confined in the city.

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But how do you enjoy having nothing to do? Are you wearying of rest? My friends here are urging me to spend the winter with them. What say you to that? I anticipate your answer; but you need not fear, for I feel strongly attracted towards my mate. Though I am very happy now, I have no wish to remain. This inactivity oppresses me. It is very peasant for a time to live over childhood and school days, but it does not satisfy; one wakes from the dream, and finds a void that only some care, some real object and interest 288 in life, can fill. Yes, an active, earnest life brings more genuine happiness than dreams, and keeps both mind and body in a healthier state; and to be much under God's free heaven inspires a perpetual hymn of thanksgiving for health and being.

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